

# Youth in Minnesota Correctional Facilities:

## Responses to the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey

October 2014



Department of Public Safety  
Office of Justice Programs

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## Acknowledgements

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## Juvenile Correctional Facilities Participating in the 2013 MN Student Survey

In order to participate in this study, sites had to provide residential detention or correctional services and have an education program onsite:

- ◆ Anoka County Secure Juvenile Center, Lino Lakes, *Pines School*
- ◆ Anoka County Non-Secure Shelter Facility, Lino Lakes, *Pines School*
- ◆ Arrowhead Juvenile Center, Duluth, *Arrowhead Academy*
- ◆ Boys' Totem Town, St. Paul
- ◆ Dakota County Juvenile Services Center, Hastings, *Riverside School*
- ◆ East Central Regional Juvenile Center, Lino Lakes, *Pines School*
- ◆ Hayward Group Home, Albert Lea
- ◆ Heartland Girls' Ranch, Benson
- ◆ Hennepin County Home School, Epsilon Program, Minnetonka
- ◆ Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Center, Minneapolis, *Stadium View School*
- ◆ ITASKIN Juvenile Center, Grand Rapids, *ITASKIN Education Center*
- ◆ KidsPeace Mesabi, Buhl, *Mesabi Academy*
- ◆ Minnesota Correctional Facility: Red Wing, *Walter Maginnis High School*
- ◆ Minnesota Correctional Facility: Togo, *Alice O'Brien School*
- ◆ Olmsted County Juvenile Detention Center, Rochester
- ◆ Prairie Lakes Juvenile Detention Center, Willmar, *Prairie Lakes School*
- ◆ Ramsey County Juvenile Services Center, St. Paul
- ◆ Red Lake Juvenile Detention Center, Red Lake Nation
- ◆ Southwest Youth Services, Magnolia
- ◆ Washington County Juvenile Detention Center, Stillwater
- ◆ West Central Regional Juvenile Center, Moorhead
- ◆ Woodland Hills, Duluth, *Woodland Hills Academy*

## Minnesota Student Survey Overview

The Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) is a comprehensive questionnaire administered every three years to students in grades 5, 8, 9 and 11 in Minnesota public schools. The survey includes a wide variety of questions related to youth attitudes, behaviors and health indicators. Questions reflect a range of protective factors, including connectedness to school, family and community, as well as risk factors such as drug and alcohol use, violence and victimization.<sup>1</sup> The survey originated in 1989 with the most recent administration occurring in 2013.

The MSS is an invaluable tool as it collects information on myriad topics in an anonymous, self-report format. Not only do MSS responses stand alone as a valuable data set with statewide representation, they also supplement and enhance other state-level data sources, and show trends in student behaviors and attitudes over time. The MSS provides students, parents and their communities a dynamic vehicle for ongoing communication about issues vital to the health, safety and academic success of youth. It is a valuable tool for school districts, county agencies, and state agencies in planning meaningful and effective ways of supporting students and families.

Content of the MSS is collaboratively determined by Minnesota's departments of Education, Health, Human Services and Public Safety. Many of the questions are dictated by state or federal data collection requirements. Participation in the survey is voluntary such that school districts elect to participate and any individual student may refuse to participate for any reason. Participation in the MSS has historically been high: In 2013, 84 percent of school districts participated. In total, 67 percent of public school students in grades 5, 8, 9 and 11 (roughly 162,000) took the 2013 MSS.<sup>2</sup>

Extensive changes were made to the survey during the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey administration. The survey population changed from students in grades 6, 9, and 12 to students in grades 5, 8, 9, and 11. This change was made to allow for more school buildings to participate in the survey. Because of these grade changes, an additional survey had to be developed that was appropriate for students in grade 5. In the past, there were two surveys; one for students in grade 6 and one for students in grades 9 and 12. For 2013, new surveys were developed specifically for students in grade 5, grade 8 and a combined survey for students in grades 9 and 11.

The survey questions were also considerably revamped for this current administration. New topics include sexual identity, experiences with homelessness and parental incarceration, eating and sleep habits, missing school and distracted driving. In addition, a series of questions related to positive youth development and identity were adapted from the Search Institute and included.

Finally, this administration was the first time that the survey was offered both on paper and via the web. The majority of students (56%) took the survey using the traditional paper and pencil mode while one-third took the survey online.

## History of the Report on Youth in Correctional Facilities

A unique subset of Minnesota students are those receiving an education outside of the “mainstream” school setting, including youth placed in juvenile correctional facilities. Minnesota has both secure (locked) juvenile facilities and non-secure facilities. By Minnesota statute, placement of youth in secure facilities is reserved for youth accused of a delinquent act who are deemed to be a risk to self or others, to not appear for court, or to not stay in the lawful custody of the person to whom they are released.<sup>3</sup> Youth placed in correctional facilities also include those who have been adjudicated delinquent and court-ordered to complete a correctional placement by a judge.

The first survey of students in juvenile correctional facilities occurred in 1991 after legislation directed the Minnesota Department of Education to survey “special populations,” including Juvenile Corrections/Detention Centers.<sup>4</sup> By 1995, public schools and correctional facilities were on the same three-year administration calendar. Historically, the report on youth in correctional facilities has consisted of comparative analysis between the survey responses of youth in correctional facilities and those of mainstream school youth of the same age and gender. In 2007, the matched sample was expanded to include matches on race and Hispanic ethnicity.

In 2010, three separate reports were issued: A statistical analysis of youth in correctional facilities versus a matched sample of mainstream youth; a statistical analysis of the responses of males versus females in correctional facilities; and an exploration of how the responses of youth who reported trauma indicators<sup>a</sup> on the MSS differed from those who did not. 2013 reports include this study of youth in facilities compared to mainstream youth, and a special report exploring trauma in the mainstream population of students and in correctional facilities.

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<sup>a</sup> Trauma was defined as youth who reported one or more of the following indicators on the 2010 MSS: Familial or non-familial sexual abuse; physical or sexual abuse in a dating relationship; or experiencing or witnessing domestic violence.

## Purpose

The goal of this report is to examine how youth in correctional facilities who took the 2013 MSS responded similarly or differently to the survey than a matched sample of youth from the mainstream student population. While the MSS is not expressly written or designed to monitor juvenile delinquency, it does shed light on attitudes and experiences that often precede anti-social behavior or delinquent activity.

Differences between the two student groups can provide information on what challenges youth in correctional facilities are facing that might have contributed to their involvement in the juvenile justice system and out-of-home placement. With this knowledge, both prevention and intervention efforts can be targeted at youth with the greatest level of need. In addition, the responses of youth in correctional facilities to the survey can provide valuable information to Minnesota's youth facilities regarding residents' past experiences with victimization, trauma, chemical use and mental health concerns. This can inform a trauma-informed approach as well as other programming and service needs.

In addition, this report investigates statistical differences between the responses of males and females in correctional facilities. A wide body of research supports that boys and girls often follow different pathways into the juvenile justice system. While many risk factors for anti-social and delinquent behavior are the same for both genders, research also demonstrates that girls and boys can have different exposure to certain risk factors, as well as different sensitivities to their effects.<sup>5</sup>

Many MSS questions are asked from a problem-oriented perspective rather than one of youth strengths. For example, youth are asked how many times they have used drugs but not how many times they have had the opportunity to use and have chosen not to. Problem-oriented questions tend to result in interventions that are problem-driven rather than strength- and solution-focused. For each risk factor, there may also be a protective factor at work keeping youth safe, healthy and connected. In addition, survey data may show *what* youth are doing or *how* they are feeling, but it does not capture the *why* behind them.



## Methodology

In 2013, 22 of 28 residential juvenile correctional facilities with an onsite education program participated in the MSS. Twenty-one participating facilities were licensed by the Minnesota Department of Corrections and one facility operates under tribal authority.<sup>b</sup> This represents a participation rate of 79 percent of Minnesota juvenile correctional facilities. There are additional licensed residential correctional programs in Minnesota, but the youth in these placements attend public school programs where they would have the opportunity to take the MSS along with other youth.

Locked or “secure” facilities are specifically encouraged to participate in the MSS because youth in secure placements are least likely to have had the opportunity to take the survey in their home school district. In addition, youth who meet the criteria for admission to secure correctional facilities represent some of Minnesota’s highest-risk juvenile offenders. While some of the participating facilities have secure programming, it is not a requirement for survey participation or inclusion in this report. Both secure and non-secure programs had youth participate in the MSS.

The MSS has three survey levels depending on the grade of the student. Youth in correctional facilities all take the Level 3 survey designed for students in grades 9 and 11, since this is the most age appropriate questionnaire. All youth in Minnesota’s juvenile correctional facilities took the survey using the standard paper and pencil mode.

Data presented in this report come from comparing the survey responses of youth in correctional facilities (n=389) to those of a matched sample of youth respondents in the mainstream school population (n=389).<sup>c</sup> As was developed in 2007, the mainstream sample of youth reflects the same age, gender *and* race/ethnicity<sup>d</sup> as respondents in the juvenile correctional facilities. Using an analysis tool known as a “chi-squared test of independence,” true statistical differences between youth in correctional facilities and the matched sample of mainstream youth can be identified.<sup>e</sup> Statistical difference between the two student populations are highlighted in this report.

This report also highlights statistical differences in the responses of males and females in correctional facilities to explore how risk-factors for justice system involvement many differ by gender. This can also assist practitioners in designing gender-responsive programming for females who are the minority in a system typically designed to serve males.

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<sup>b</sup> Of these facilities, 10 have secure beds only; three have secure and non-secure beds; and nine have non-secure beds only. Schools within correctional facilities were permitted to administer the survey in a manner that was logistically feasible to their operation. Youth held in detention following arrest or pending court may not have been surveyed because of the high turnover rate of these youth. As such, the sample of youth in correctional facilities may also over-represent youth who are in the facilities on longer term, residential placements.

<sup>c</sup> Approximately two percent of all mainstream school surveys and six percent of juvenile correctional facility surveys were omitted from the final datasets because gender was missing or response patterns were frequently inconsistent or highly improbable. It is unknown how many youth in the facility population refused to participate or had previously taken the survey in their local education setting.

<sup>d</sup> For the remainder of this report, the term “race” will be used in place of the terms “race and ethnicity.”

<sup>e</sup> Unless otherwise noted in the text, data in this report will be presented when there is a statistically significant difference based on the Pearson Chi-Square Coefficient ( $\chi^2 < .05$ ).



## Data Limitations

### YOUTH REPRESENTATION AND GENERALIZABILITY

While the juvenile correctional facilities that participated in the 2013 MSS have statewide representation, not all facilities participated. There may be some regional representation lacking that may affect demographic distributions in the data.

While a sufficient number of individual students were analyzed to be statistically valid, these samples still reflect a small portion of the Minnesota youth population and a small percentage of youth who experience detention or residential correctional placements in any given year. In addition, many youth are involved in the juvenile justice system who are not placed out of the home or removed from their mainstream school setting. The majority of youth involved in the justice system remain in their communities. The responses of these youth are within the mainstream school data or the data on youth in Alternative Learning Centers.

### RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISTINCTIONS

This report preserves the self-reported racial distribution of youth in correctional facilities on the day of the 2013 MSS. Due to small numbers, it does not examine the responses of racial or ethnic groups separately for differences *between* unique racial populations. African Americans are the largest population of color in juvenile correctional facilities. In this manner, the experiences of African American youth in this sample may be more pronounced than the experiences of other racial groups.

### EFFECT OF YOUTH PLACEMENT ON SURVEY RESPONSES

The MSS is designed to be taken by students while in their community. As such, some questions are asked with short time parameters such as “in the last seven days” or “in the last 30 days.” When youth in correctional facilities respond to such questions, they may be reporting on their behaviors and experiences while in the facility, rather than in the community. As such, most questions with these short time parameters have been excluded from analysis.

### SURVEY QUESTION LIMITATIONS

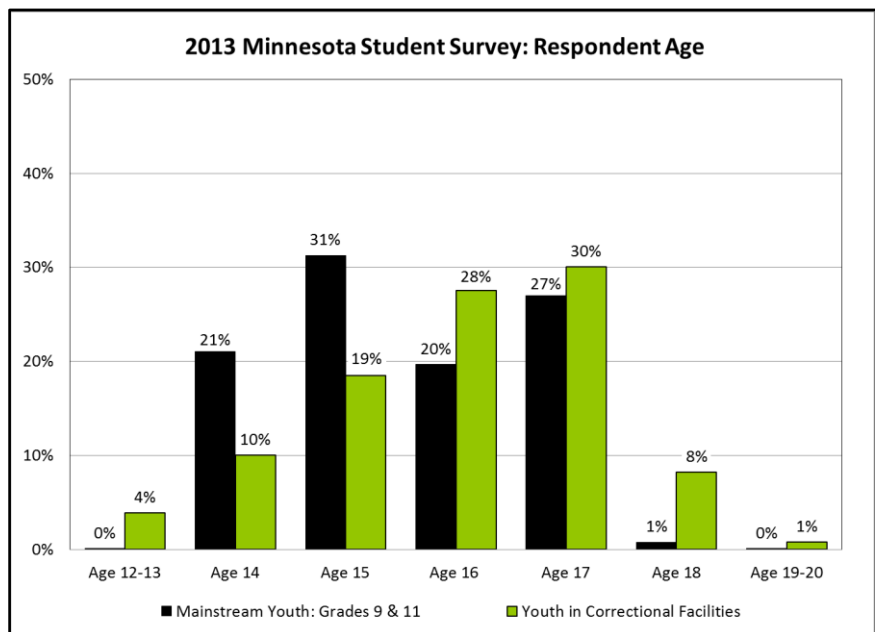
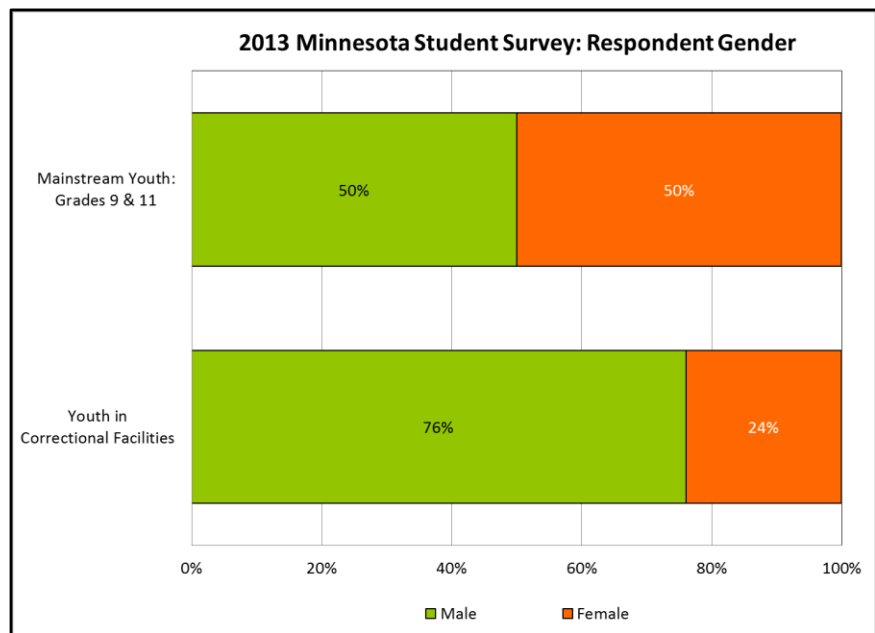
Many responses given by the students naturally lead to additional questions by researchers and readers. This report is limited to providing responses to questions that were asked in the MSS and does not generally provide additional data from outside sources. If there appears to be a gap in some content areas or a focus on others, it is the result of the MSS questionnaire content.

## The Importance of a Matched Sample

### GENDER AND AGE

Creating a matched sample of mainstream youth is important because, demographically, youth in correctional facilities are different from the mainstream student population in Minnesota. For example, while mainstream youth were equally male and female (50% each), youth in correctional facilities during the 2013 MSS administration were 76 percent male and 24 percent female. The matching process neutralizes response differences that might be attributable to gender.

With regard to age, because the mainstream school MSS respondents were in 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades, the largest age groups are 15- and 17-year olds (31% and 27%, respectively). In correctional facilities, the majority of residents are 16- and 17-year olds (28% and 30%, respectively). Youth in correctional facilities are also more likely than mainstream students to be ages 18-to-20. The student matching process neutralizes response differences that might be attributable to respondents' age.

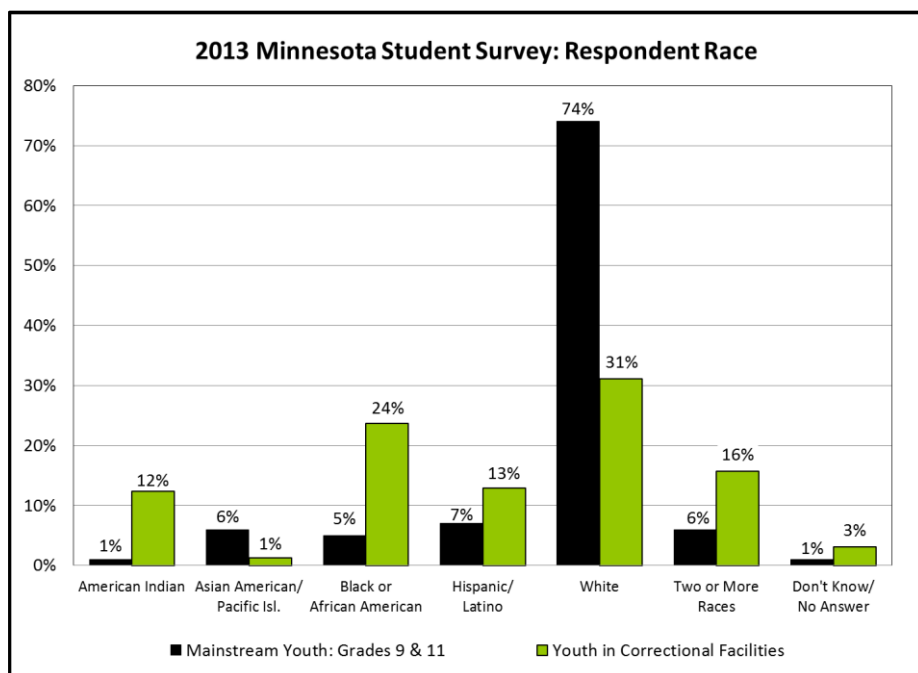


There is a statistically significant age difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities: Over half of girls are ages 13-to-15 (54%), whereas 73 percent of boys are ages 16-to-18.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY

Another important variable to consider is respondent race. The overall mainstream student population that participated in the 2013 MSS was 74 percent White alone and 25 percent youth of color.<sup>f,6</sup> As a racial distribution, this fairly accurately matches U.S. Census Bureau population projections for youth in Minnesota. White, non-Hispanic youth constitute just over 77 percent of youth ages 14-to-17 statewide according to census bureau estimates.<sup>7</sup> In juvenile correctional facilities, however, the racial landscape looks much different: At the time of the 2013 MSS, youth from correctional facilities were 66 percent youth of color and 31 percent White, non-Hispanic.<sup>8</sup>

For this reason, the mainstream sample group used in this report also has the same racial composition as the youth in correctional facilities. Comparing two “mirror image” groups of students helps ensure that differences in their survey responses cannot be attributed to race or Hispanic ethnicity.



Boys in correctional facilities are more likely to identify as Black or African American than girls (41% versus 27%). Conversely, girls are more likely to identify as White than boys (60% versus 48%).

<sup>f</sup> One percent of mainstream students did not indicate a race or ethnicity.

<sup>8</sup> Three percent of youth in correctional facilities did not indicate a race or ethnicity.

## Family

For most, family is the primary social influence during the formative years of early childhood. Families provide emotional support, learning opportunities, moral guidance, self-esteem and physical necessities. Parents are a critical factor in the social development of children. Countless studies have produced empirical findings that parental behavior can either increase or decrease an adolescent's risk for delinquency and other problem behaviors. Supportive parent-child relationships, positive discipline methods, close monitoring and supervision, and parental advocacy for their children consistently buffer youth against problem behaviors.<sup>8</sup>

Family disorganization and discord, on the other hand, can have the opposite effect on children. In families in which there is violence, favorable attitudes toward criminal or anti-social behaviors, and family disruptions, children are more likely to engage in future delinquency and anti-social behavior.<sup>9</sup> The behaviors need not be extreme to yield negative outcomes. Even poor family management practices such as failure to set clear expectations for behavior, poor monitoring and supervision, and inconsistent discipline are predictive of later delinquency and substance abuse.<sup>10</sup>

Family structure or composition alone does not cause delinquency. While single-parent families often have greater challenges associated with finances, poverty and supervision of children, one of the most consistent protective factors for youth is a positive relationship with a parent.<sup>11</sup> If parents model or promote pro-social attitudes and behaviors, these will more likely be present among their children regardless of family composition.

### LIVING ARRANGEMENT

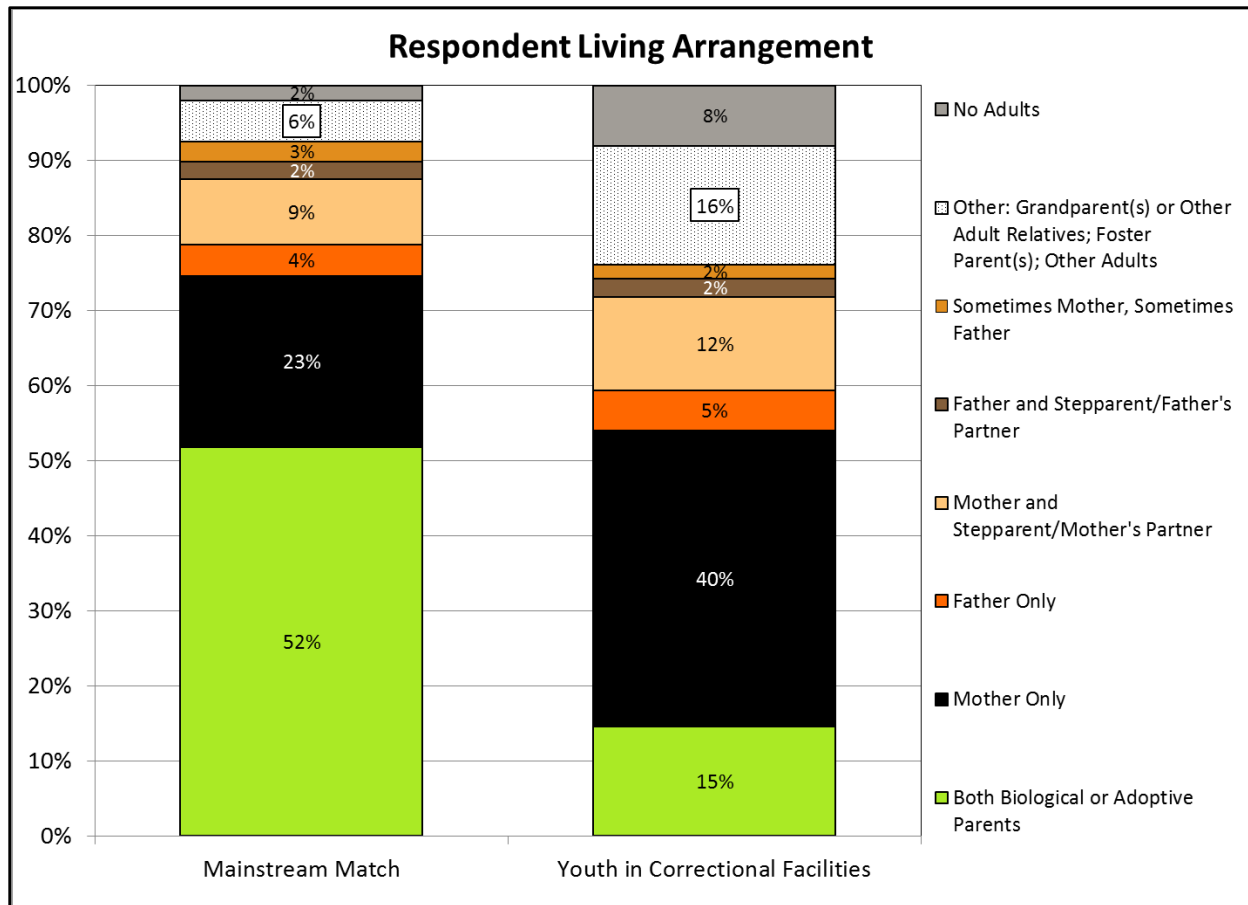
Youth in mainstream schools are significantly more likely to report living with both biological/adoptive parents than peers in juvenile correctional facilities.<sup>h</sup> Fifty-two percent of the mainstream youth sample lives with both biological/adoptive parents. Comparatively, only 15 percent of youth in correctional facilities live with both biological/adoptive parents. Youth in correctional facilities are substantially more likely to live with only their mother (40%) than the matched sample of mainstream youth (23%).

Across both student samples, the number of youth living with their father alone (4% to 5%) and a parent and step-parent (13% to 17%) are similar. Joint custody arrangements between their mother and father also apply to between 2 percent and 3 percent of youth in both student groups.

Youth in correctional facilities are more likely to select an "other" living arrangement than the mainstream matched sample (16% versus 6%). While foster-parents and grandparents are included in this category, it may also include living arrangements with other adult family members, friends, or out-of-home placements.

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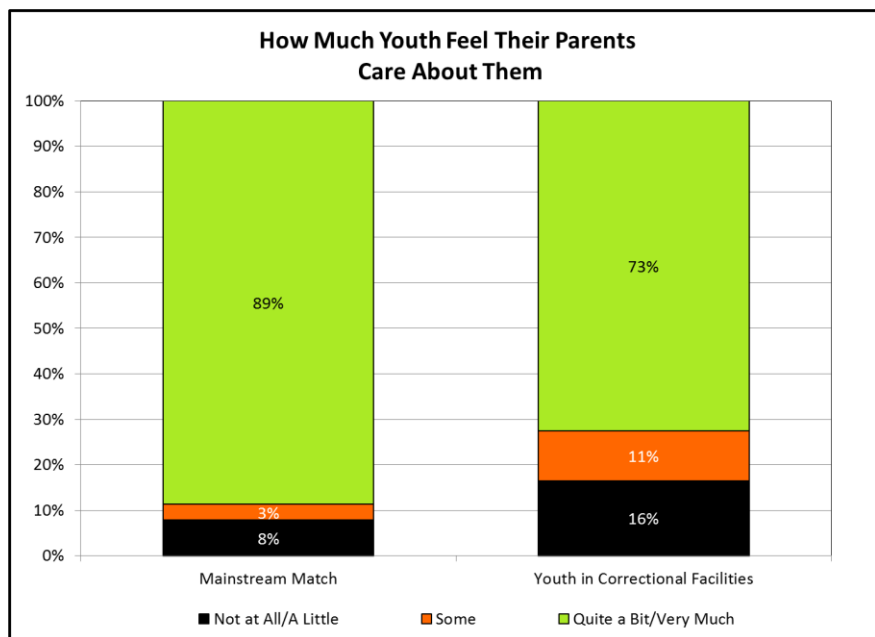
<sup>h</sup> In both populations, two adoptive parents accounted for 2.7 percent or fewer of total living arrangements.



## PARENTAL SUPPORT

Despite many different living arrangements, both mainstream youth and youth in correctional facilities indicate that their parents care about them. Nevertheless, mainstream youth are more likely to report their parents care about them *quite a bit* or *very much* than youth in correctional facilities (89% versus 73%).

When specifically asked if they can talk to their parents about problems they are having, between 70 percent and 80 percent

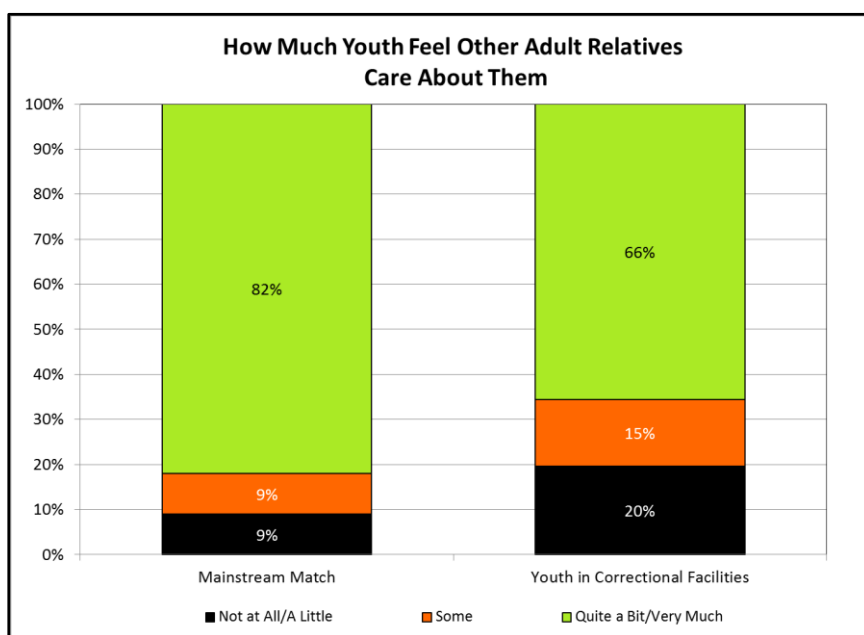


of youth in both groups report that they can talk to their mother *most* or *some of the time*. In both student groups, fewer youth express being able to talk to their fathers about problems. Thirty-three percent of youth in correctional facilities indicate their *father is not around* compared to 13 percent of mainstream youth. As a result, fewer than half (44%) of youth in correctional facilities feel they can talk to their father for support with problems, versus 65 percent of mainstream youth.

## OTHER FAMILY SUPPORTS

In conjunction with parents, extended family members such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins are important assets to youth. Social service providers generally recognize extended family as the most preferred caregiver in the event a parent is unable to care for their child and often bring extended family members in to provide support when caregivers are under strain. The professional fields of juvenile delinquency prevention and juvenile corrections acknowledge extended family involvement as an important contribution to indigenous, holistic support systems.

Eighty-two percent of mainstream youth feel other adult relatives care for them *quite a bit* or *very much*, which is only true of two-thirds of youth in correctional facilities (66%). Youth in correctional facilities are more likely than mainstream youth to report that other adult relatives care about them *a little* or *not at all* (20% versus 9%).



There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding living arrangement; whether they feel their parents care about them; and whether they feel other adult relatives care for them. Girls were less likely to report they can talk to their mother about problems they are having than boys. Fifty-seven percent of boys selected *yes, most of the time* compared to 38 percent of girls.

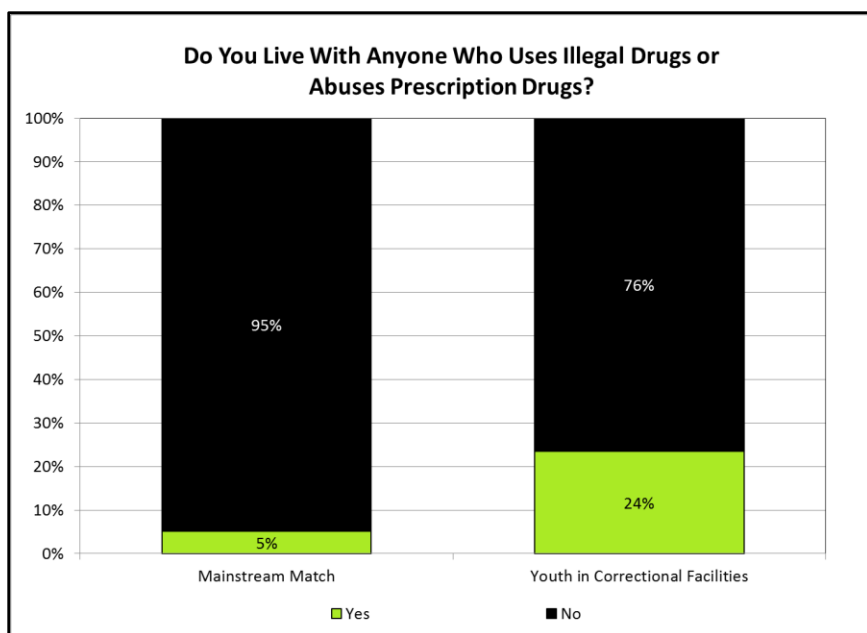
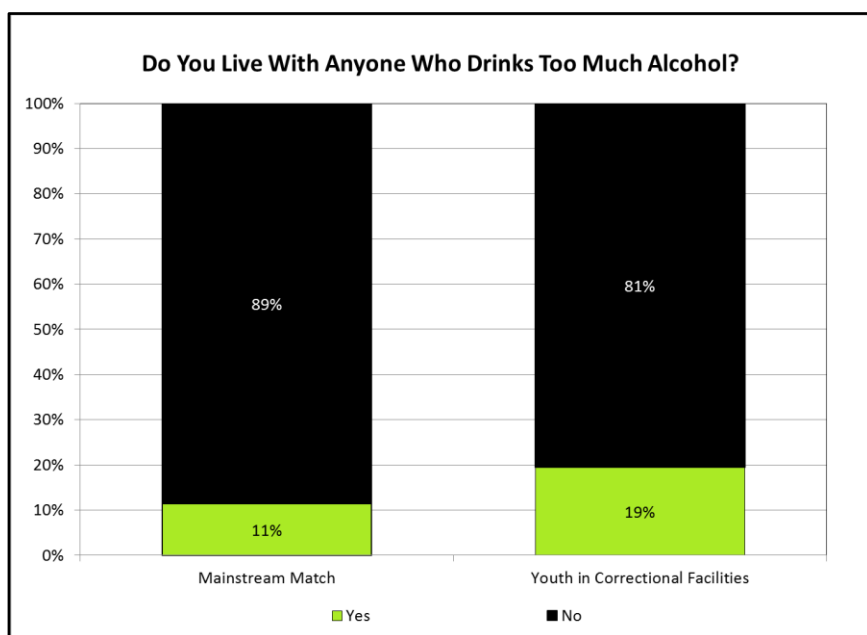
## FAMILY DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

Chemical use and abuse within families can be extremely destructive to family cohesion and youths' sense of safety. Research shows that there are higher rates of child physical and sexual abuse in families where chemical abuse is present and, in these situations, youth can engrain feelings of responsibility for their parent's abuse or feel the need to protect family members from the consequences of their using. Particularly, when parents are experiencing addiction, youth are often prematurely pressured into caretaking roles for parents, siblings and household upkeep. In addition, adult drug and alcohol abuse can normalize chemical use and lead to earlier exposure, access and experimentation by youth themselves.<sup>12</sup>

Youth in correctional facilities report substantially more problems associated with family member drug and alcohol use than do youth in the mainstream schools. While 11 percent of youth in the mainstream sample report that they live with someone who drinks too much alcohol, nearly two-in-10 youth in correctional facilities report that this is the case (19%).

Mainstream youth are less likely to report living with someone who uses illegal drugs or abuses prescription drugs compared to alcohol (11%). Youth in correctional facilities are more likely to report illegal or prescription drug abuse in their home than too much alcohol use (24% versus 19%).

Youth in correctional facilities are nearly five times more likely than mainstream youth to report they live with someone who uses illegal drugs or abuses prescription drugs (24% versus 5%).





A separate analysis explored how many youth in correctional facilities reported *either* someone in the home who drinks too much alcohol *or* someone who uses illegal drugs or abuses prescriptions. In total, 27 percent of youth in correctional facilities reported either type of chemical use compared to 12 percent of mainstream students. A smaller percentage of youth in correctional facilities reported living in a household where there is *both* alcohol abuse *and* other chemical use or abuse (9%) compared to just 2 percent of the mainstream sample of students.

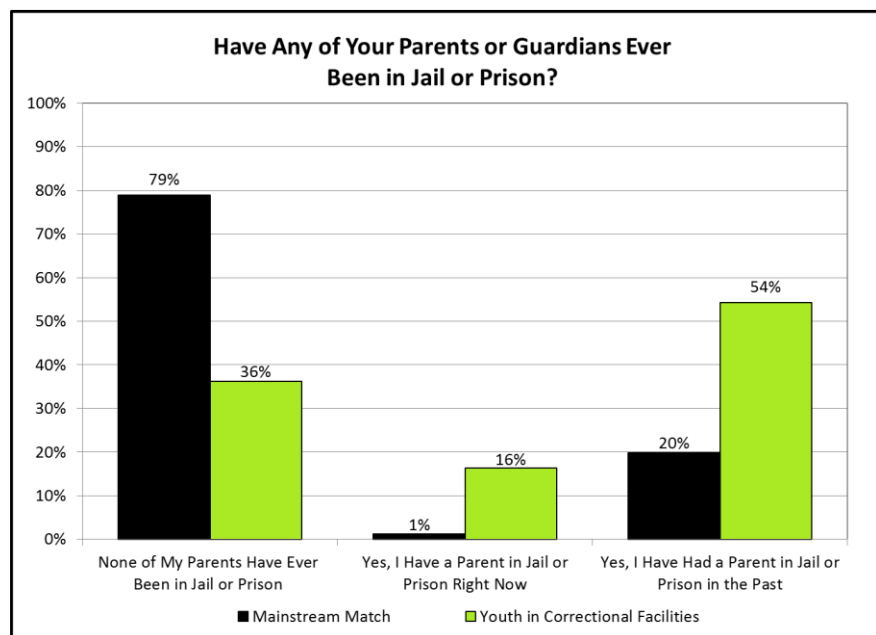
Boys and girls in correctional facilities are equally likely to report that they live with someone who drinks too much alcohol, or who uses illegal drugs or abuses prescription drugs.

## PARENT INCARCERATION

A question new to the 2013 MSS inquires whether youth have had a parent or guardian in jail or prison. Separation from a parent through incarceration is recognized as an *Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)* which describes a traumatic experience happening in a person's life before they turn age 18. Cumulatively, ACEs have a strong impact on health and functioning in adulthood and are connected to chronic disease, mental illness, violence and victimization.<sup>13,14</sup> Parental incarceration increases the risk of children living in poverty, household instability, creates trauma, shame and stigma for children, and can be as painful as other forms of parental loss.<sup>15</sup> Stress can also occur when parents return home from incarceration upsetting the routine that was established in their absence.<sup>16</sup>

Youth in correctional facilities are significantly more likely to report they have had a parent or guardian in jail or prison. Thirty-six percent of youth in correctional facilities report *none* of their parents or guardians have ever been in jail or prison as compared to nearly eight-in-10 mainstream youth (79%).

More than half of youth in correctional facilities report a parent or guardian has been to jail or prison in the past (52%) and 16 percent report a parent was incarcerated at the time of the survey. Conversely, two-in-10 mainstream youth (20%) report a parent has been to prison in the past while just 1 percent had a parent or guardian in prison at the time the survey was given.



A separate analysis was conducted to identify how many youth had a parent or guardian incarcerated currently *or* in the past. In total, just over half of youth in correctional facilities (53%) indicated a parent or guardian has been incarcerated in the past or was incarcerated currently. This was true for 10 percent of mainstream youth.

Boys in correctional facilities are more likely than girls to report they currently had a parent or guardian in jail or prison (19% versus 9%). Boys and girls were equally likely to indicate that a parent or guardian had been in jail or prison in the past.

## School Connectedness

School is a significant area that can either be a protective factor or a risk factor for youth. The lack of positive feelings for and identification with one's school has been shown to be directly related to juvenile delinquency and have been correlated with drug and alcohol use at school.<sup>17</sup> Children with low commitment to school, low educational aspirations, and poor motivation are also at risk for general offending and for child delinquency. Other risk factors include academic failure and dropping out of school.<sup>18</sup>

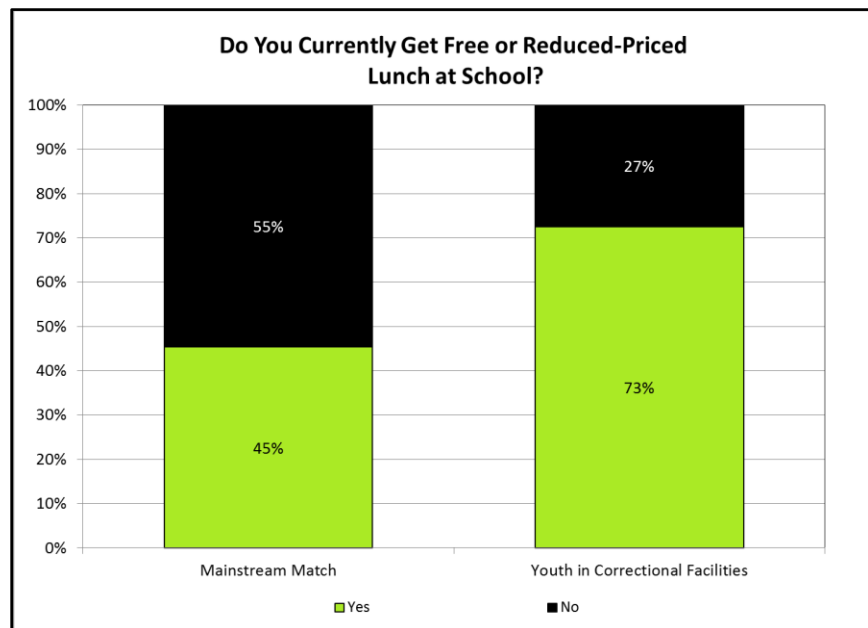
An additional specific school risk factor for delinquency is poor academic performance. Low achievement has been found to be related to the prevalence, onset, frequency, and seriousness of delinquency even when individual intelligence and attention problems are taken into account. It is likely that children who perform poorly on academic tasks will fail to develop strong bonds to school, will have lower expectations of success, and will have shorter school plans.<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, many questions on the 2013 MSS related to school ask about behavior occurring in the past 30 days. These include questions about skipping classes or full school days; physical conflicts with other students and bullying behavior; involvement in school disciplinary incidents; and illegal behavior at school such as drug use or theft. Youth in correctional facilities may have been in placement during part or all of the 30 days prior to the survey, which could interfere with their responses. School-related questions with a 30-day timeframe have been excluded from analysis.

### FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH PROGRAM (FRPL)

According to the Annie E. Casey Kids Count Data Center, 13 percent of all Minnesota youth in 2011 were living in poverty. A greater number, 38 percent, met household income or other criteria to receive Free or Reduced Priced Lunch at school in 2012.<sup>20</sup> While the mainstream matched student population is close to that figure (45%), more than seven-in-10 youth in correctional facilities (73%) indicate they receive Free or Reduced Priced Lunch at school.<sup>i</sup> Those involved in

correctional placements may disproportionately represent youth in lower income families. The FRPL question is the only economic indicator on the 2013 MSS.



<sup>i</sup> Technically, all youth placed in residential facilities receive FRPL. This is largely an administrative process, however, and it is unlikely that youth in correctional facilities would have an awareness of a new FRPL status. As such, it is most likely that youth in correctional facilities are reporting their FRPL status in their community school when answering this question.

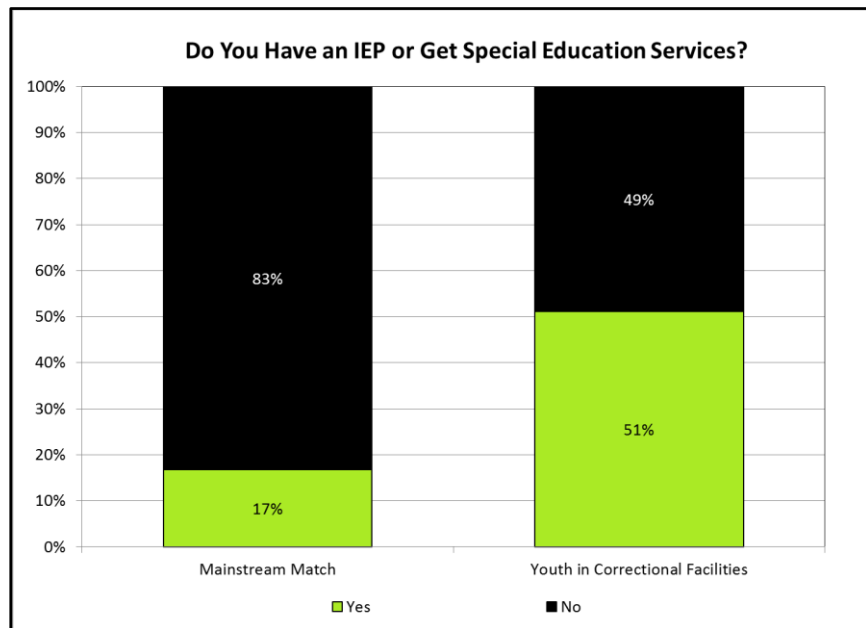
Boys and girls in correctional facilities are equally likely to report receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunch at school.

## INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs)

Individualized Education Programs are required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) for students who have physical, cognitive, emotional or behavioral disabilities that impact their ability to learn. Those who meet criteria for an IEP are eligible for additional resources and support to ensure that they receive a free, appropriate public education.<sup>21</sup>

Minnesota has 13 categorical disability areas. A team of qualified professionals, including parents, determines whether a student meets criteria in one of the disability areas and is in need of special education services.<sup>22</sup> The term special education is defined in Minnesota as, “any specially designed instruction and related services to meet the unique cognitive, academic, communicative, social and emotional, motor ability, vocational, sensory, physical, or behavioral and functional needs of a pupil as stated in the IEP.”<sup>23</sup>

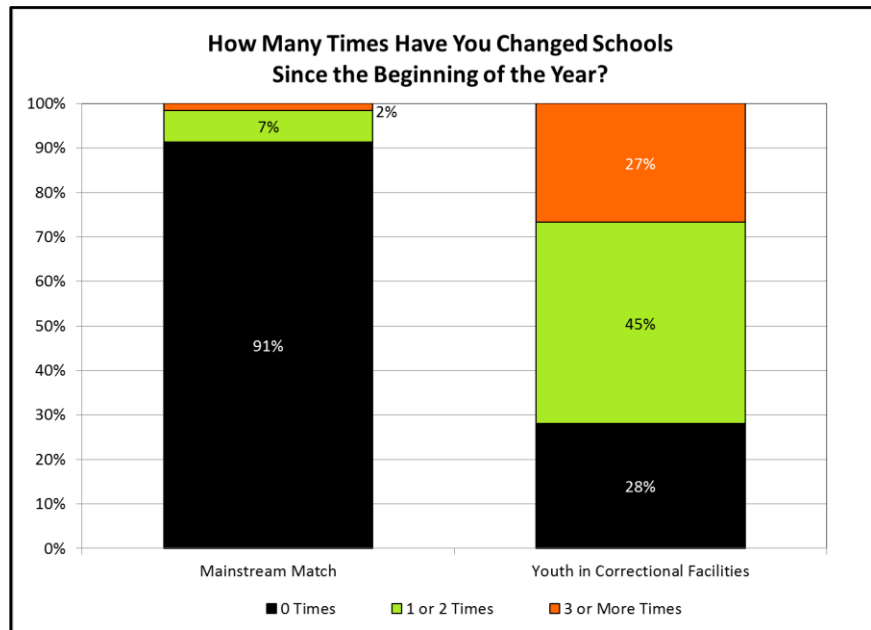
Over half of youth in correctional placements (51%) report that they have an IEP or receive special education services. This is statistically different than the matched sample of mainstream youth (17%). There are no additional questions on the 2013 MSS to gather information about if the IEPs are related to behavior, learning, cognition, or physical disabilities.



Boys in correctional facilities are statistically more likely to have an IEP than girls (55% versus 39%).

## SCHOOL MOBILITY

More than seven-in-10 youth in correctional facilities (72%) report that they have changed schools *one or more times* since the beginning of the current school year. This is true for only 9 percent of the matched sample of mainstream youth. It is possible that youth in the correctional facilities are counting their move from their mainstream school into the educational program within the correctional facility.



Nevertheless, 27 percent of youth in correctional facilities report *three or more* school changes in the past year, as compared to 2 percent of mainstream students. Over nine-in-10 mainstream students (91%) benefited from the stability of a single school setting in 2013 compared to just 28 percent of youth in correctional facilities.

The reasons for school mobility reported in the MSS are unknown. They may be indicative of behavioral issues that result in suspension or transfer to other schools; academic moves required to provide the appropriate level of services for their IEP; or related to geographic moves by a caregiver either within or between school districts. The necessity of changing locations to find employment and affordable housing would likely have a greater impact on single-parent households and lower-income families, which clearly impacts a larger percentage of youth in correctional facilities.

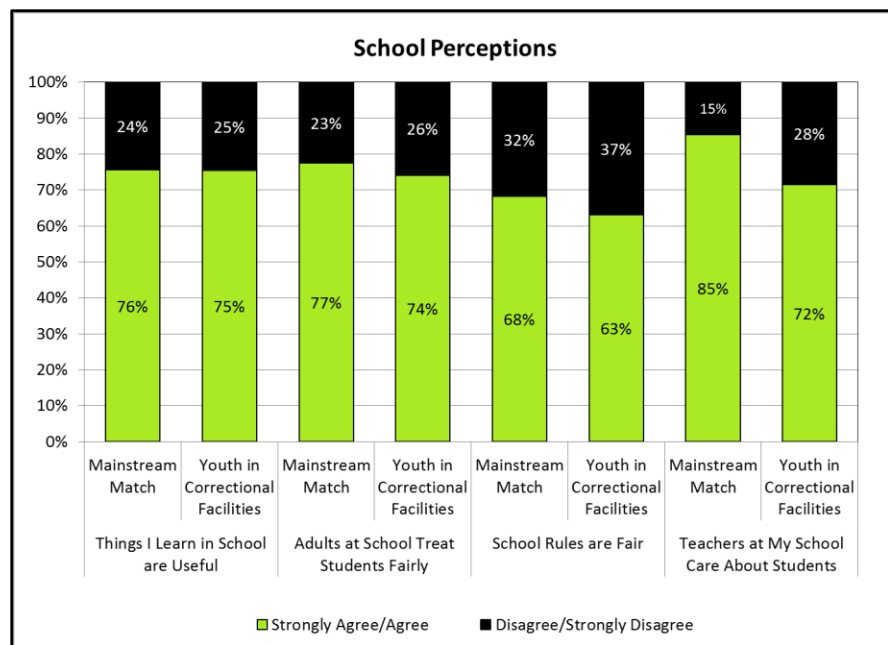
There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding the number of school changes in the past year.

## SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS

Youth taking the MSS are asked many questions about school rules, teachers, the school environment, and their identity as a student. A sampling of the MSS content related to school perceptions are included.

There was no statistical difference between youth in correctional facilities and mainstream youth with regard to whether they feel they learn useful things in school; whether adults at school treat students fairly; and whether the school rules are fair. Approximately three-quarters of students in both populations feel they learn useful information and that adults treat students fairly. Between 63 percent and 68 percent of both student populations feel the rules at school are fair.

There was a statistically significant difference in whether they feel teachers at the school care about them. Mainstream youth were more likely to *agree or strongly agree* that teachers care about students (85%) than youth in correctional facilities (72%). Nevertheless, nearly three-quarters of youth in correctional facilities (72%) feel teachers care about students. In a separate question, youth are asked if teachers care about them specifically. Twenty-four percent of mainstream youth said *a little or not at all* compared to 43 percent of youth in correctional facilities.

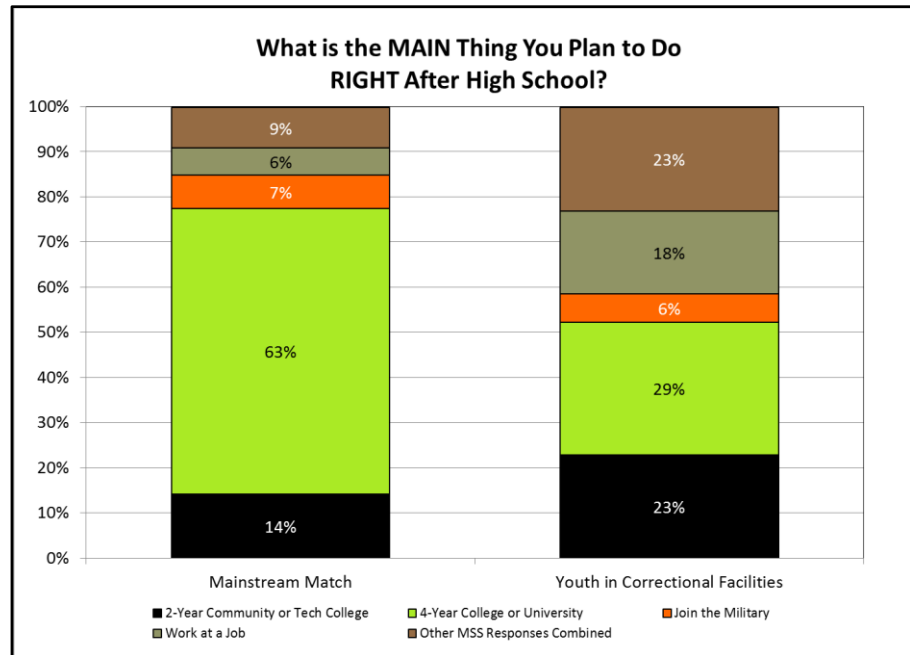


Girls in correctional facilities are less likely than boys to *strongly agree* that adults at school treat students fairly and that school rules are fair. Girls are also more likely to *disagree* with feeling the things they learn in school are useful (30% versus 23%). Both boys and girls expressed equal levels of agreement that teachers care about students and are interested in them as a person.

## SCHOOL PLANS

The Minnesota Student Survey inquires as to what youth plan to do immediately following high school. The most common responses are presented in the graph. Youth in mainstream schools are over twice as likely to plan to go to a 4-year college or university than youth in correctional facilities (63% versus 29%). Conversely, youth in correctional facilities are more likely to plan to attend a 2-year community college or technical program than mainstream students (23% versus 14%).

Youth in correctional facilities are three-times more likely to report they plan to get a job and work right after high school than mainstream youth (18% versus 6%).



Plans immediately following high school were not statistically different for boys and girls in correctional facilities.



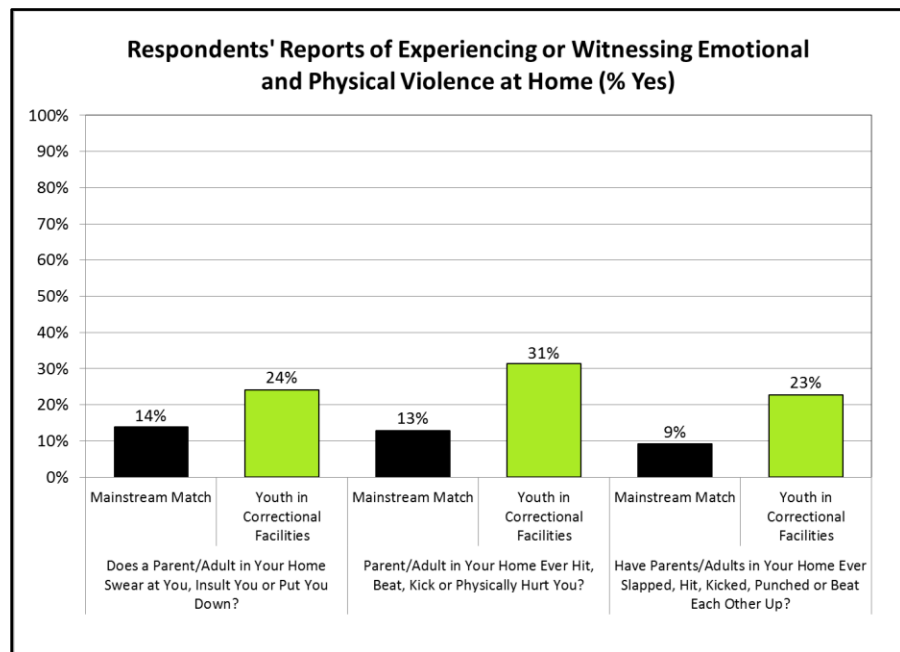
## Victimization

It is well established that youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system are also victims of violence at disproportionate rates. The specific consequences of trauma depend on the age of the child, but early exposure can interfere with age-appropriate development and place a child at greater risk of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression and conduct disorders. Traumatized children may develop disconnected and distorted ways of processing emotions such as anger and fear, and have difficulty forming healthy relationships. Teenagers who have symptoms of PTSD are at greater risk for a variety of other problems, including alcohol and drug use, suicide, eating disorders, school truancy, criminal activity and dating violence.<sup>24</sup>

Juveniles as an age group are collectively at risk for certain types of victimization. The most common offenses committed against juveniles are simple assault, larceny (theft), aggravated assault and sex offenses. Sixty-six percent of all forcible and non-forcible sex offenses have a youth as the victim.<sup>25</sup> In 2008, national data showed that adults were responsible for 48 percent of all crimes against juveniles. Family perpetrators make up 25 percent of all violent crimes against juveniles, and one-third (33%) of sex offenses committed against juveniles.<sup>26</sup>

### FAMILY VIOLENCE

Youth in correctional facilities are statistically more likely to report emotional and physical violence in their home than mainstream youth. Nearly one-quarter of youth in correctional facilities report that a parent or adult in their home regularly swears at them, insults them, or puts them down (24%). Witnessing domestic violence can also have adverse effects on youth. Nearly one-quarter of youth in correctional facilities (23%) report that



parents or adults in their home have slapped, hit, kicked or punched each other. Fewer youth in mainstream schools report emotional abuse perpetrated by a parent or adult in their home (14%) and 9 percent report interpersonal violence between parents or adults.

More than three-in-10 youth in correctional facilities (31%) report that they themselves have been hit, beat, kicked or physically hurt by an adult or parent in their home. This is 2.4 times more than violence experienced by their peers in mainstream schools (13%).

Boys and girls in correctional facilities are not statistically different as to whether they had been verbally or physically abused by a parent or an adult in their household. Girls were, however, more likely than boys to report that parents or other adults in the home have been physically violent with one another (32% versus 20%).

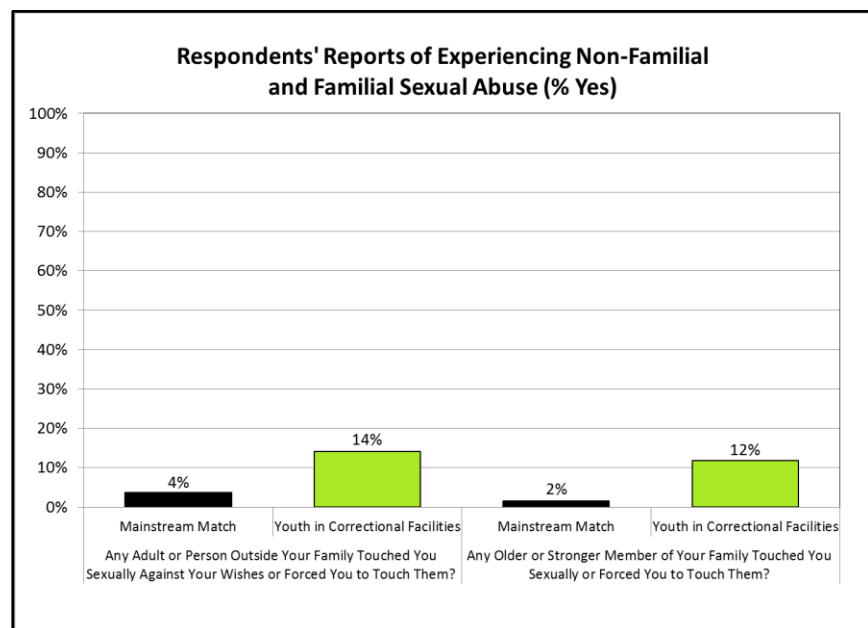
## SEXUAL ABUSE

Children and adolescents who have been sexually abused can suffer a range of psychological and behavioral problems. These problems typically include depression, anxiety, guilt, fear, sexual dysfunction, withdrawal and acting out. Depending on the severity of the incident, victims of sexual abuse may also develop fear and anxiety regarding the opposite sex or sexual issues, and may display inappropriate sexual behavior.<sup>27</sup>

The negative effects of child sexual abuse can affect the victim for many years and into adulthood. Adults who were sexually abused as children commonly experience depression. Additionally, high levels of anxiety in these adults can result in self-destructive behaviors, such as alcoholism or drug abuse, anxiety attacks, situation-specific anxiety disorders and insomnia. Many victims also encounter problems in their adult relationships and adult sexual functioning. Re-victimization is a common phenomenon among people abused as children. Research has shown that child sexual abuse victims are more likely to be the victims of rape or to be involved in physically abusive relationships as adults.<sup>28</sup>

Youth in correctional facilities report experiencing familial sexual abuse at a level six times that of their mainstream matched sample (12% versus 2%).

It is more common for both mainstream youth and youth in correctional facilities to report being sexually victimized by a non-familial perpetrator. Youth in correctional facilities, however, are still nearly four times more likely be victimized by a non-familial perpetrator as mainstream youth (14% versus 4%).



A separate analysis was conducted to explore how many youth have been sexually abused *either* by a familial or a non-familial perpetrator. In total, 16 percent of youth in correctional facilities report victimization by either sexual perpetrator compared to 4 percent of mainstream youth. Five percent of

youth in correctional facilities report sexual abuse by *both* a familial *and* a non-familial perpetrator compared to less than 1 percent of mainstream students.

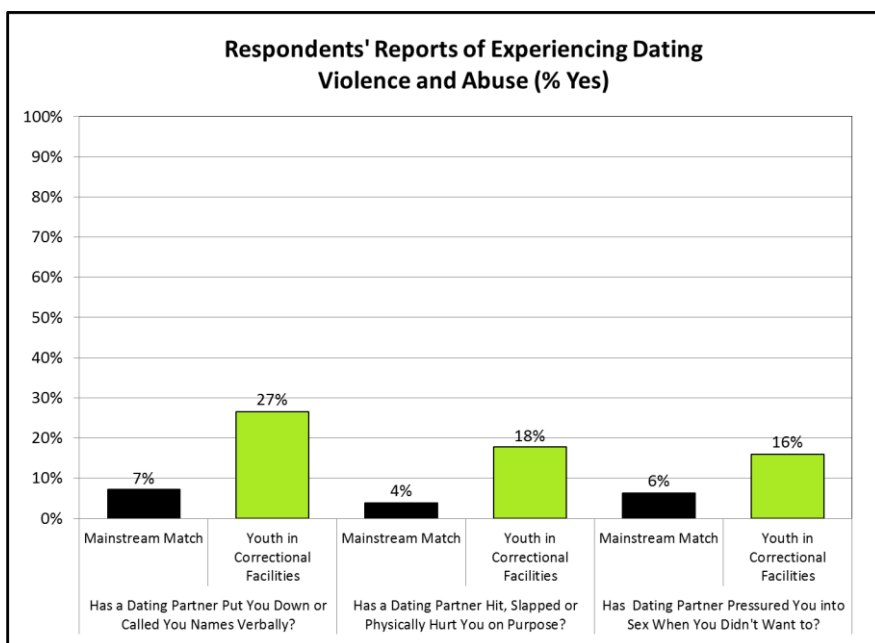
Girls in correctional facilities are statistically more likely to report that they have been sexually abused by someone outside their family (31% versus 8%). Reports of sexual abuse by a familial perpetrator are not statistically different between the genders.

## DATING VIOLENCE

Youth in correctional facilities report more violence in their dating relationships. Twenty-seven percent of youth in correctional facilities report they have been put down or called names by a dating partner compared to 7 percent of mainstream youth.

Youth in correctional facilities are also at greater risk of physical violence and sexual coercion than their mainstream peers. Eighteen percent of youth in correctional facilities

have been hit, slapped or physically hurt by a dating partner and 16 percent have been pressured into having sex when they didn't want to. Mainstream students report experiencing physical violence and sexual pressure at levels much lower than their peers in correctional facilities (4% and 6%, respectively).



Girls in correctional facilities are statistically more likely than boys to report they have been verbally abused in a dating relationship (43% versus 20%); that they have been physically abused in a dating relationship (30% versus 13%); and that they have been pressured into having sex in a dating relationship when they didn't want to (32% versus 10%).

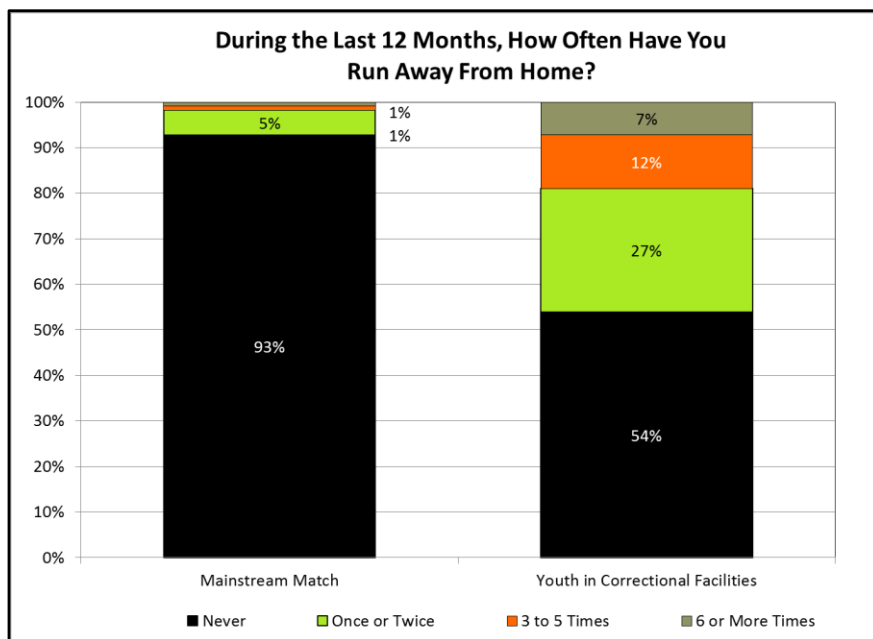
## RUNAWAY AND HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness has serious consequences for young people and is especially dangerous for those between the ages of 16 and 24 who do not have familial support. Living in shelters or on the streets, unaccompanied homeless youth are at a higher risk for physical and sexual assault or abuse, and physical illness including HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, homeless youth are at a higher risk for anxiety

disorders, depression, PTSD, and suicide due to increased exposure to violence while living on their own.<sup>29</sup>

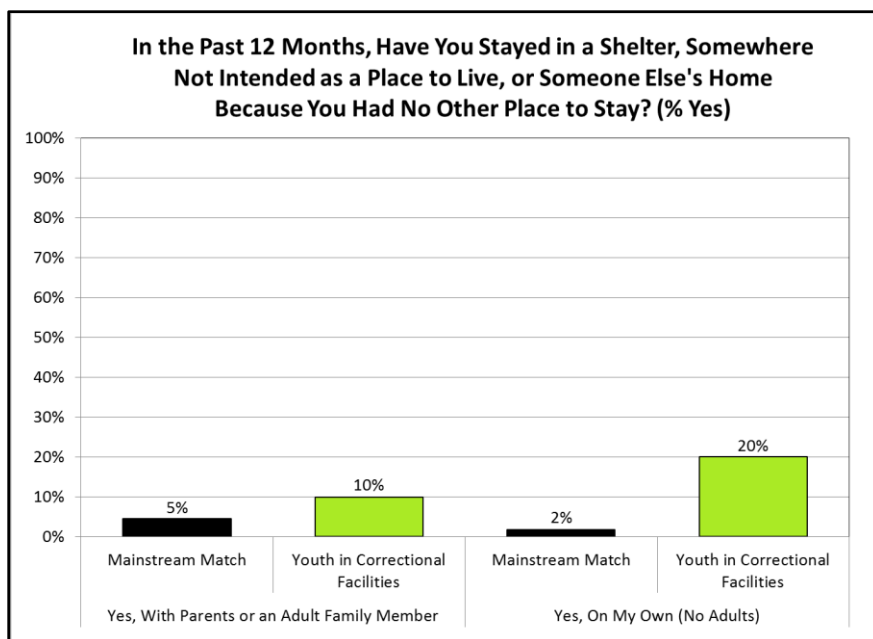
Homeless youth are also at-risk to be sexually exploited in prostitution, use and abuse drugs, and engage in other dangerous and illegal behaviors. Youth often must engage in “survival sex,” which refers to the selling of sex to meet subsistence needs such as shelter, food, drugs or money. The dangers inherent in survival sex place it among the most damaging repercussions of homelessness among youth.<sup>30</sup>

More than four-in-10 youth in correctional facilities (46%) have run away from home *at least once* in the past 12 months as compared to 7 percent of youth in the mainstream schools. Of youth in correctional facilities, 12 percent report running away *three to five times* in the past year, and an additional 7 percent report running away *six times or more*. The reasons youth have elected to run away and the length of time away from home are unknown.



The majority of mainstream youth (93%) have not run away from home in the past year. Five percent of youth in the mainstream student sample reported running away *once or twice* in the past year.

A new question on the 2013 MSS asks youth whether they have had no place to stay at any time in the past year. This question attempts to assess for homelessness, and if youth were on their own or with a parent or adult.



Twice as many youth in correctional facilities as mainstream youth reported they have stayed with a parent or adult in a shelter, at someone else’s home, or somewhere not intended as a place to live in

the past year (10% versus 5%). The response difference between youth in facilities and mainstream youth is greater for youth who report experiencing homelessness on their own. Two-in-10 youth in correctional facilities have stayed somewhere other than their home in the past year compared to just 2 percent of mainstream youth.

Boys and girls in correctional facilities do not statistically differ in terms of the number of times they have run away from home in the past year or if they have experienced homelessness in the past year.

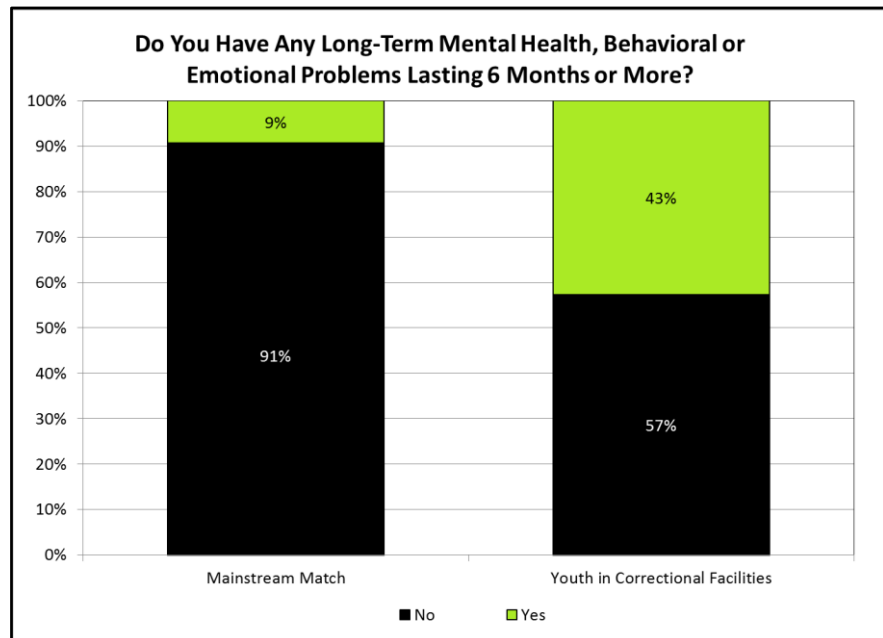
## Mental and Emotional Health

Identifying and responding to the mental health needs of youth in contact with the juvenile justice system is recognized as a critical issue at the national, state and local levels. Often, a youth's disruptive or inappropriate behavior is the result of a mental health disorder that has gone undetected and untreated. Mental health screening data and several well-constructed studies suggest that up to 70 percent of youth in correctional facilities suffer from mental health disorders, many with multiple and severe disorders, including co-occurring disorders of substance use and mental health. For some youth, contact with the juvenile justice system is often the first and only chance to get help. For others, it is the last resort.<sup>31</sup> The lack of effective treatments for youth in the community increases the burden on juvenile justice facilities.<sup>32</sup>

### LONG-TERM MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

There is a significant difference in the percentage of youth in correctional facilities and those in mainstream schools who self-report a long-term mental health, behavioral or emotional problem. The MSS defines long-term as lasting at least six months.

Over four-in-10 youth in correctional facilities (43%) self-report a long-term mental health problem compared to 9 percent of youth in mainstream schools.



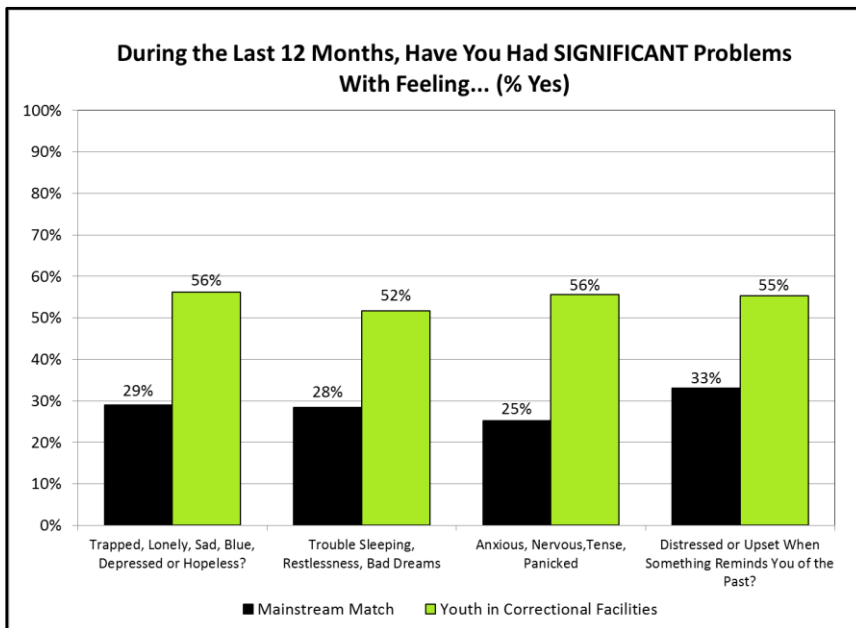
Girls in correctional facilities are statistically more likely than boys to report a long-term mental health, emotional or behavioral problem (56% versus 38%).

### MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS

The 2013 MSS has youth self-report their emotional condition over the past year. Youth in correctional facilities were statistically more likely to agree with statements designed to gauge mental and emotional health concerns.

More than half of all youth in correctional facilities indicate they have had significant problems in the past year with feeling depressed and hopeless (56%); anxious, nervous, tense or panicked (56%); or distressed when reminded of something from their past (55%). Youth in correctional facilities also report difficulty sleeping, restlessness and bad dreams (52%).

Between one-quarter and one-third of a matched sample of students in mainstream schools reported these issues in the past year.

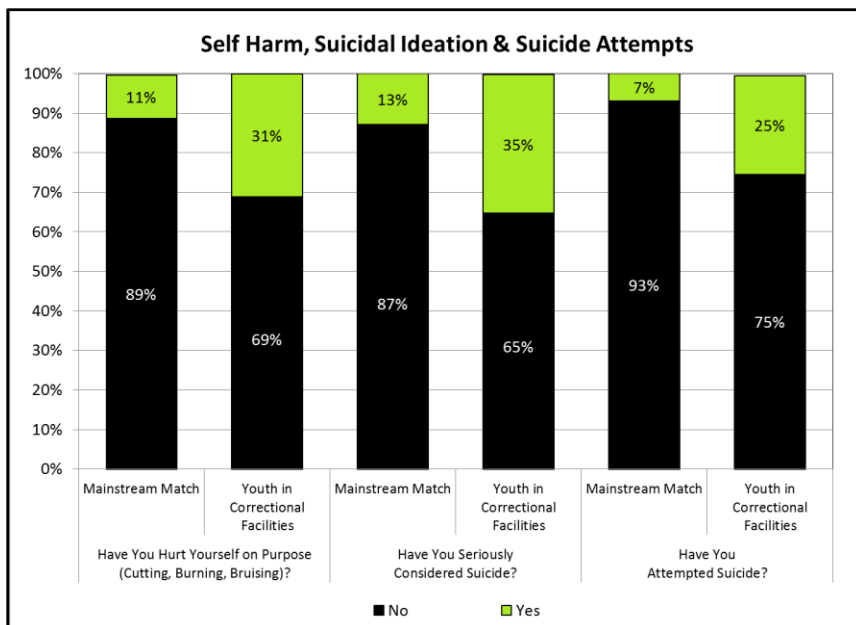


Girls in correctional facilities are more likely than boys to report significant mental health problems. Seventy-five percent or more of girls reported feeling depressed or hopeless, having trouble sleeping, feeling anxious or panicked, or becoming very distressed when reminded of the past. These were true for between 42 percent and 48 percent of boys in correctional facilities.

## SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE

Several factors can put a person at risk for attempting or committing suicide, but having these risk factors is not always predictive of suicide. Risk factors include previous suicide attempt(s), history of depression or other mental illness, alcohol or drug abuse, family history of suicide or violence, feeling alone, and having access to lethal suicide means.<sup>33</sup>

Youth in correctional facilities and youth in mainstream schools had statistically different responses across the question series related to self-harm and suicide. More





than three-in-10 youth in correctional facilities have engaged in self-harm such as cutting, burning or bruising (31%), and 35 percent have seriously considered attempting suicide. Mainstream students reported self-harm and suicidal ideation at lower levels (11% and 13%, respectively).

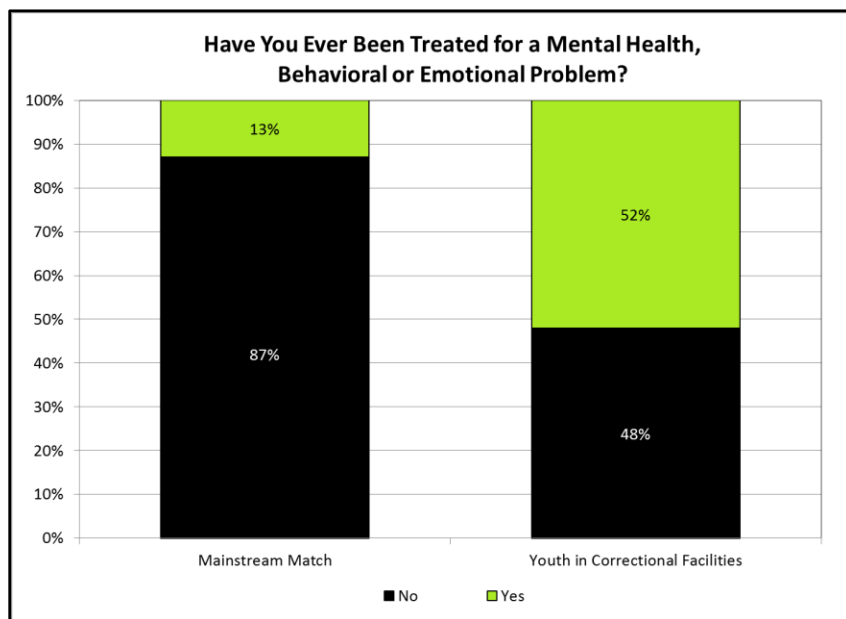
One-quarter of youth in correctional facilities reported an actual suicide attempt in their life (25%) compared to 7 percent of the mainstream student population.

Girls in correctional facilities are more likely than boys to report they have engaged in self-harm (43% versus 27%); seriously considered suicide (59% versus 27%); and actually attempted suicide (40% versus 20%).

## MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

On the matter of having received treatment for a mental or emotional health issue, there is a statistically significant difference between the two student groups.

Youth in correctional facilities are more likely to have received treatment for a mental health, behavioral or emotional disorder than mainstream students. More than half of youth in correctional facilities have received treatment (52%) as compared to 13 percent of mainstream students.



Boys in correctional facilities were less likely than girls to report receiving treatment for a mental health problem (53% *No*, versus 33% *No*).

## Alcohol and Drug Use

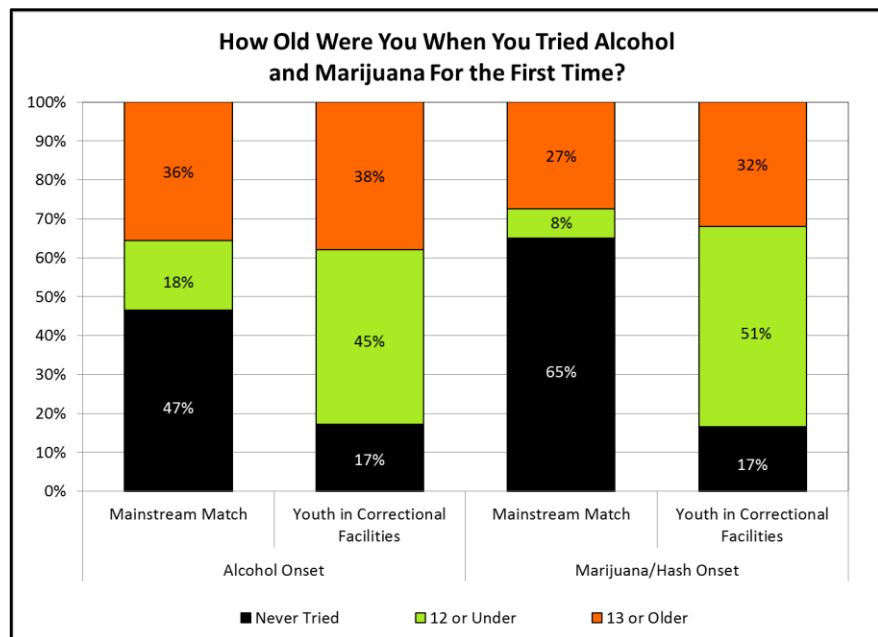
Persistent substance abuse among youth is often accompanied by an array of problems including academic difficulties, health-related consequences, poor peer relationships and mental health issues. Declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, increased potential for dropping out, and other school-related problems are associated with adolescent substance abuse. Because substance abuse and delinquency are inextricably linked, arrest, adjudication and intervention by the juvenile justice system are eventual consequences for many young people engaged in such behavior.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, chemical use impairs judgment, decision-making and analysis of consequences. Research suggests that youth are more likely to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during the commission of crimes against people than general property crimes. Additionally, those under the influence are more likely to act in a group during the commission of illegal acts.<sup>35</sup>

### AGE OF ONSET

The MSS asks youth to self-report the age when they first tried using chemicals. Youth in correctional facilities are statistically more likely than mainstream youth to have tried alcohol and marijuana, and they began using at a younger age.

Nearly half of mainstream youth (47%) report they have *never tried* alcohol other than a few sips, and two-thirds (65%) have *never tried* marijuana or hashish. Conversely, just 17 percent of youth in correctional facilities have abstained from trying alcohol or marijuana. Having tried alcohol and marijuana are equally prevalent among youth in correctional facilities. Mainstream youth are more likely to have only tried alcohol.



For youth in correctional facilities, it is most common for their alcohol use to have begun at age 12 or under (45%). An even larger percentage began their marijuana use at age 12 or under (51%). For mainstream youth, it was most common for their first use of alcohol and drugs to occur at age 13 or older.

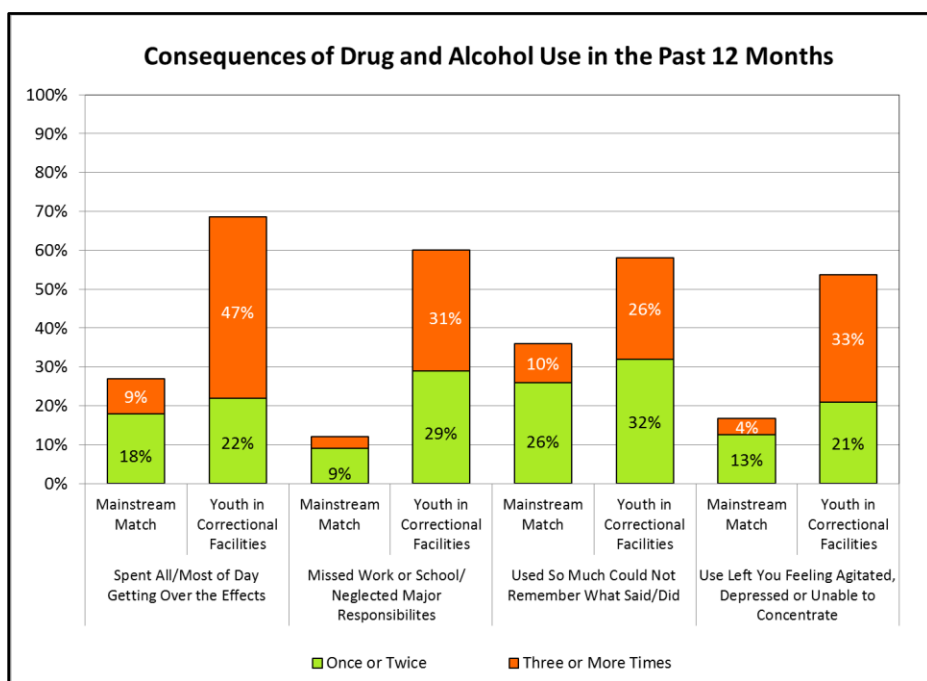
The Minnesota Student Survey does not inquire as to the age of onset for using other drugs. The survey does ask whether youth have used any “other drugs” in the past 12 months for non-medical reasons which includes cocaine, crack, heroine, methamphetamines, ecstasy, LSD, PCP or prescription drugs.

*Other drug* use also includes sniffing glues or breathing gases or spray-can contents. Youth in correctional facilities are statistically much more likely to have used *other drugs* in the past year (38%) as compared to mainstream youth (5%).

There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding when they reported first drinking alcohol or using marijuana.

## CONSEQUENCES OF USING

Consistently between one-quarter and one-half of youth in correctional facilities who report using drugs or alcohol self-report consequences associated with their use *three or more times* in the past year. These consequences include memory loss (26%), hangovers (47%), missing major responsibilities (31%), or using left them feeling agitated, depressed or unable to concentrate (33%).



These same issues applied *three times or more* to 10 percent or fewer of their mainstream counterparts. Mainstream youth were most likely to report that they *could not remember what they had said or done* as a consequence of their use in the past year (36%) and youth in correctional facilities were most likely to report spending *all or most of the day* getting over the effects of using in the past year (69%).

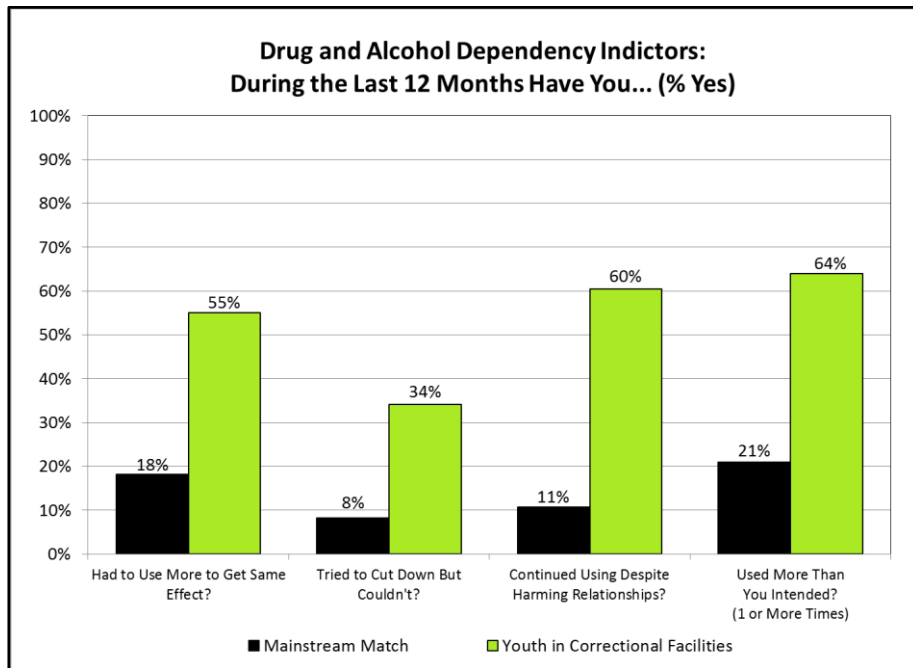
Of those who reported using chemicals in the past year, there was no statistical difference between boys and girls related to the consequences of alcohol or drug use. There was one exception: girls were more likely to report that using had left them feeling agitated, depressed or unable to concentrate *three or more times* in the past year than boys (33% versus 17%).

## ABUSE AND DEPENDENCY INDICATORS

While by no means a comprehensive assessment of drug or alcohol problems, some questions on the MSS are geared towards understanding the degree to which youth have insight and control over their use. These questions are related both to use patterns and concrete consequences associated with using.

These or similar questions are frequently components of formal chemical abuse screening tools or assessments. Again, youth in correctional facilities articulated many more issues with their drug and alcohol use than mainstream students.

Of youth who reported using drugs or alcohol in the last 12 months, more than half of youth in correctional facilities expressed having to use more drugs or alcohol to get the same effect (55%); using more drugs or alcohol than they intended to (64%), and continuing to use despite it hurting their personal relationships. (60%). Approximately one-third of youth in correctional facilities had tried to cut back on their use but could not (34%).



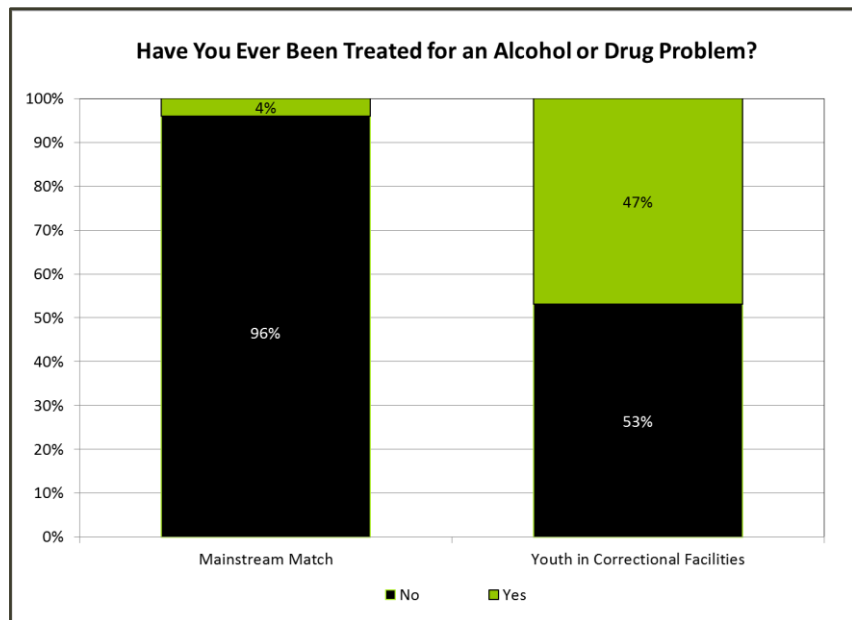
Conversely, mainstream youth who reported chemical use in the past 12 months reported fewer abuse and dependency indicators. Mainstream youth were most likely to report that they had used more than they intended (21%), or had to use more to get the same effect (18%). Approximately one-in-10 mainstream youth reported problems with relationships (11%) or had tried unsuccessfully to cut back on their use (8%).

Statistically, boys and girls in correctional facilities who have used chemicals in the past year reported comparable abuse and dependency indicators. Girls were more likely than boys to report that they have had to use more chemicals to get the same effect in the past year (53% versus 37%).

## DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT

Finally, the MSS asks youth if they have ever received treatment for an alcohol or drug problem. While most youth in mainstream schools have not received treatment for alcohol or other drugs (96%), almost half of youth in correctional facilities have received treatment (47%).

There is no additional information in the MSS regarding for which substances youth have undergone treatment, the length of the intervention, completion rates, satisfaction or effectiveness.



There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding whether they have received alcohol or drug treatment.

## Public Safety and Delinquency

It goes without saying that youth typically become involved in the juvenile justice system following behaviors that are illegal or are an affront to community safety. Youth can become involved in the juvenile justice system for a wide range of behaviors. Some behaviors fall under the rubric of *Children in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS)* such as truancy and running away from home. The ultimate goal when addressing these types of behavior is to reconnect youth to schools and families.

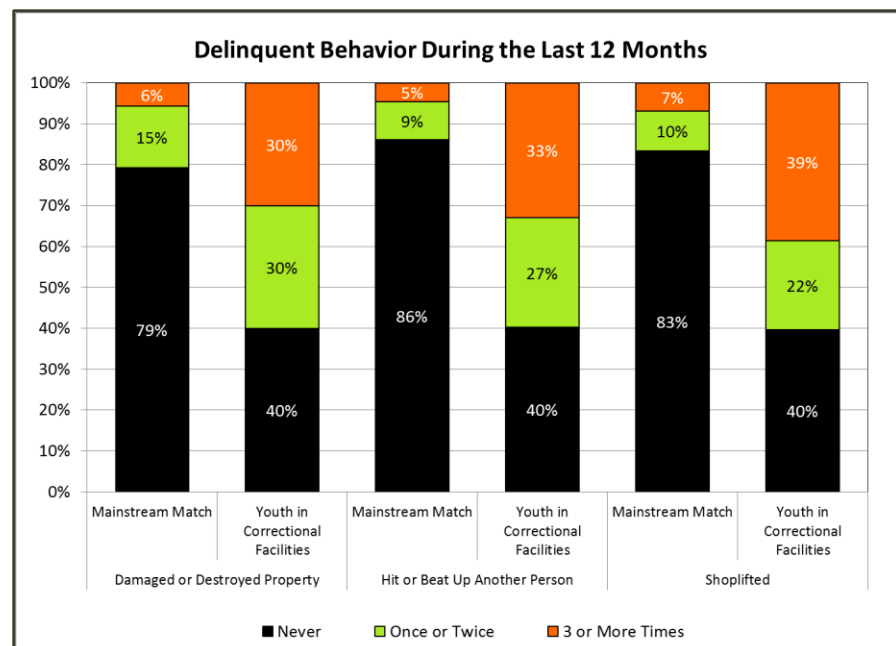
Petty offenses are non-violent, misdemeanor-level offenses such as low-level theft, disorderly conduct, or possession of drug paraphernalia. Offenses which are illegal solely because of one's status as a minor but are not illegal for adults (i.e., curfew, drinking and smoking) are also petty charges and are often referred to as "status offenses."<sup>36</sup> Petty offenses are often addressed with fines, community service/restitution or education classes.

The terms "delinquency" and "delinquent," from a legal standpoint, are reserved for acts committed by juveniles that are more serious than petty offenses and would also be unlawful if committed by an adult. Delinquent acts, depending on their severity, are labeled as misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors or felonies.

In 2013, there were 26,780 juvenile arrests in Minnesota,<sup>37</sup> only a fraction of which resulted in an out-of-home placement. Many factors are taken into account before placing a child in a correctional setting, only one of which is the offense itself. Additionally, efforts continue in Minnesota to scrutinize and refine admission criteria to ensure that youth are admitted to correctional facilities based on scores from objective risk assessment instruments.<sup>38</sup>

### ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR

Not surprisingly, youth in correctional facilities who responded to the MSS have higher rates of self-reported illegal behavior than a matched sample of mainstream peers. Sixty percent of youth in correctional facilities report engaging in physical violence, property damage and theft from a store *at least once* in the past year. Between 30 percent and 39 percent of youth in correctional facilities have engaged in these behaviors *three times or*



more. By comparison, 21 percent or less of mainstream youth reported engaging in these illegal behaviors in the past year.

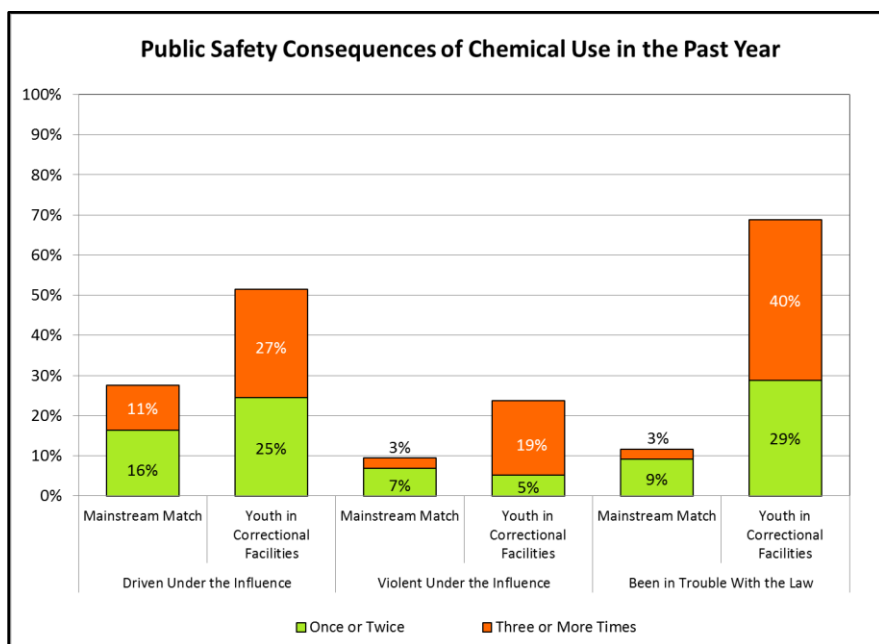
There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding delinquent behavior. Comparable levels of property damage, shoplifting, and physical violence are reported.

## PUBLIC SAFETY IMPACT OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Youth taking the MSS are asked a series of questions about the consequences of alcohol or drug use, some of which are related to public safety. More than half of youth in correctional facilities who use drugs or alcohol reported driving a motor vehicle under the influence *at least once* in the past year (52%). Of those, 27 percent have driven under the influence *three or more times*. Over one-quarter of mainstream youth who have used drugs or alcohol in the past year (26%) report driving under the influence *at least once* with 11 percent having done so *three or more times*.

Nearly one-quarter of youth in correctional facilities who have used chemicals report having become violent under the influence in the past year (24%), the majority of whom have been violent *three or more times* (19%). One-in-10 mainstream youth who use chemicals reported becoming violent in the past year (10%).

Finally, while just 12 percent of mainstream youth report their chemical use has caused them problems with the law within the past year, this is true for almost seven-in-10 youth in correctional facilities (69%).



Youth in correctional facilities not only engage in more dangerous and violent behavior when using, but are also more likely to be under the supervision of a probation officer who may monitor and consequence youth for chemical use. This may be part of the reason youth in correctional facilities report so many problems with the law related to their use.



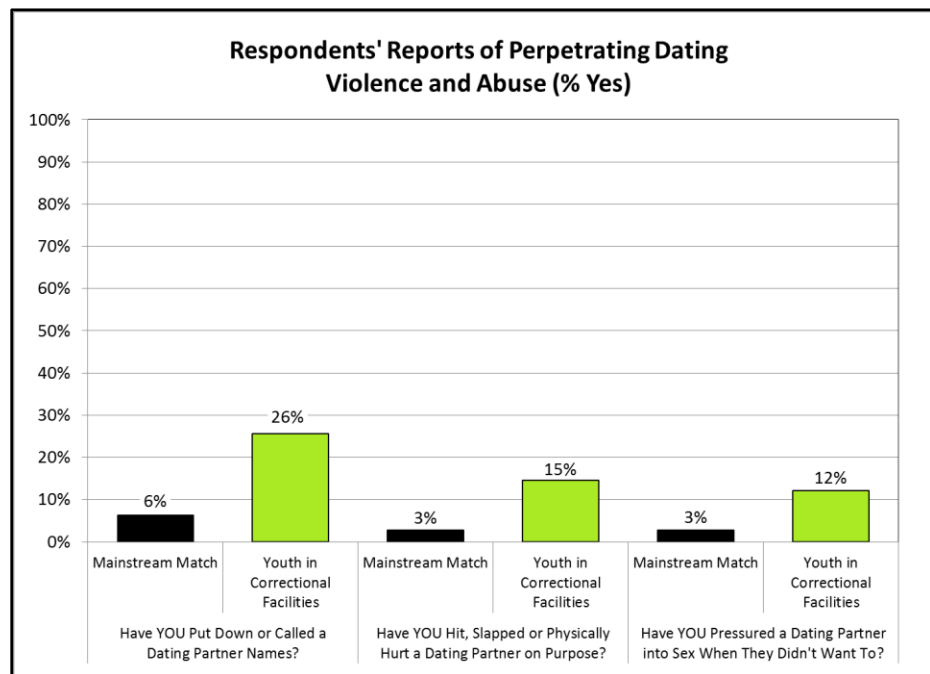
Boys and girls in correctional facilities are comparable when reporting driving under the influence and trouble with the law due to alcohol or drug use. Both boys and girls report becoming violent under the influence but boys are statistically more likely to report becoming violent *three or more times* in the past year than girls (15% versus 8%). Girls are more likely than boys to report becoming violent *once or twice* (28% versus 17%).

## DATING VIOLENCE

Data from the Victimization section demonstrates that youth in correctional facilities report being the victims of violence more than their mainstream counterparts. They are more likely to experience physical abuse from a parent; sexual abuse from familial and non-familial perpetrators; and they are more likely to be the victims of violence and sexual pressure in their dating relationships. One section of the MSS asks students to self-report if they have also perpetrated violence against a dating partner.

Youth in correctional facilities are statistically more likely than mainstream youth to report putting down their partner or calling them names (26% versus 6%); hitting, slapping or physically hurting their partner (15% versus 3%); and pressuring their partner into sex when they didn't want to (12% versus 3%).

Youth in correctional facilities report perpetrating dating abuse and violence at levels comparable to the dating victimization they experience.



All three questions related to perpetrating dating violence were statistically different between boys and girls in correctional facilities. Girls were more likely than boys to report verbally abusing a partner (33% versus 23%), and physically hurting a dating partner (26% versus 10%). Boys were more likely to report pressuring a partner into sex when they didn't want to (15% versus 6%).

## Sexual Behavior

The Level 3 MSS for students in grades 9 and 11 asks students about sexual activity. The World Health Organization defines sexual health as:

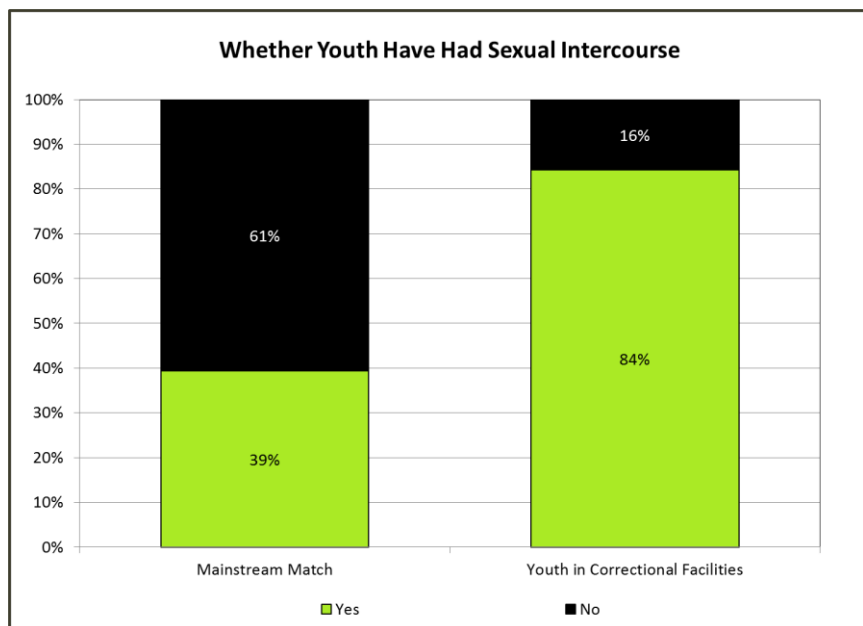
*“A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.”*

The process of sexual maturation and experimentation, while often discouraged for young adults, is a healthy, normal part of psychosocial development. Dr. Gisela Konopka, a pioneer in the field of youth development, believed that several key concepts are associated with adolescence, including the experience of physical sexual maturity, re-evaluation of values and experimentation.<sup>39</sup>

Sexually abused children, however, can experience disruptions to their sexual development and engage in sexual behavior that puts them at risk of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Some researchers view risky sexual behavior of abuse victims as an effort to gain control over a childhood experience in which they felt violated and powerless. Others note that the experience of incest and sexual abuse can make it difficult for victims to form healthy, intimate relationships. The sexualization of affection may lead one to seek closeness through repeated sexual encounters. Studies find a clear and consistent link between early sexual victimization and a variety of risk-taking behaviors, including early sexual debut, drug and alcohol use, more sexual partners and less contraceptive use.<sup>40</sup>

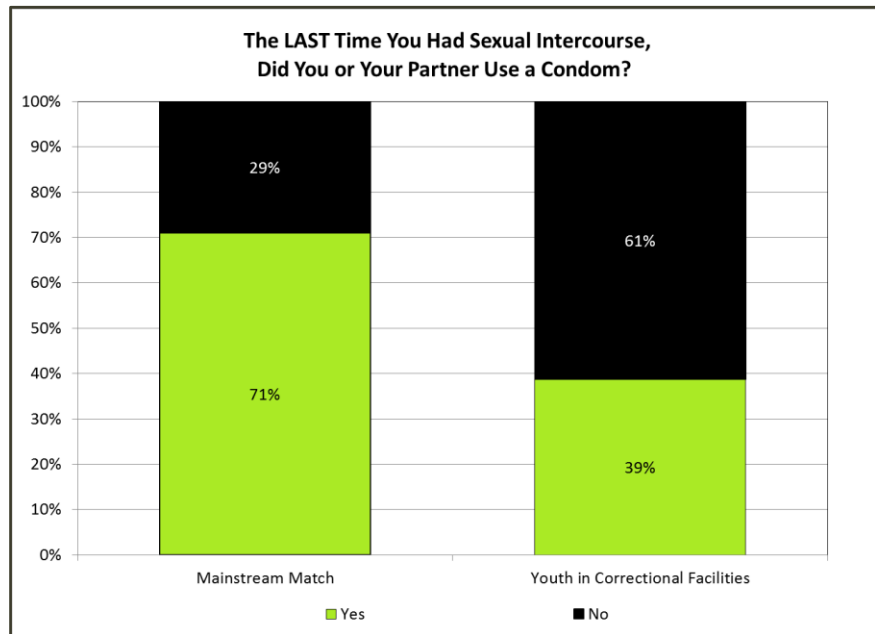
### SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Youth in correctional facilities and their mainstream student match are statistically different on virtually all questions related to sexual attitudes and activity. The greatest difference between the two populations is the number of youth who report having had sexual intercourse. Eighty-four percent of youth in correctional facilities report they have had sex. Conversely, less than four-in-10 mainstream students have had sex (39%).



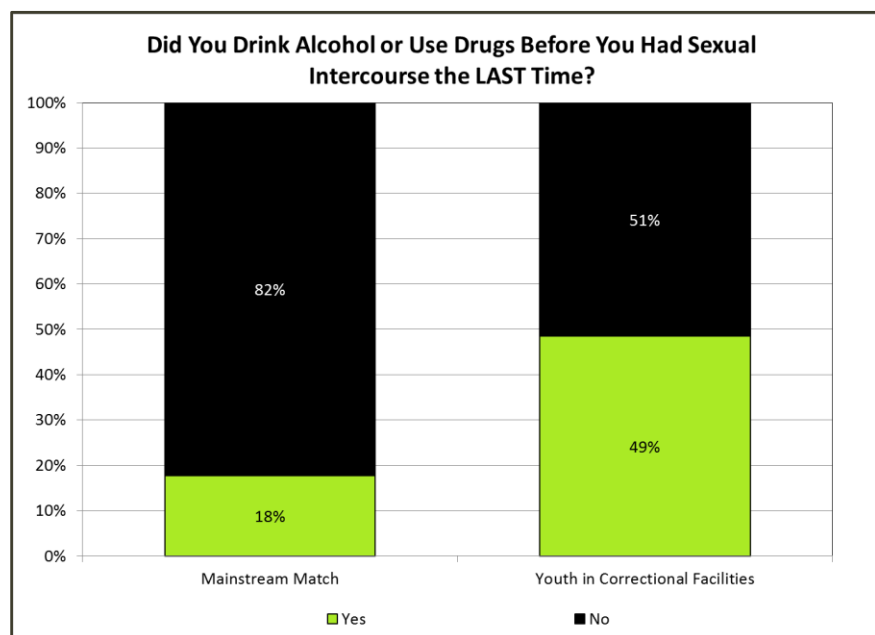
## CONDOM USE

Youth who reported having sex were asked whether they used a condom *the last time* they had sex, a question that is generally regarded as a good overall indicator of condom use. While 71 percent of mainstream students said a condom was used, just 39 percent of youth in correctional facilities used this method of birth control and disease prevention.



## SEX UNDER THE INFLUENCE

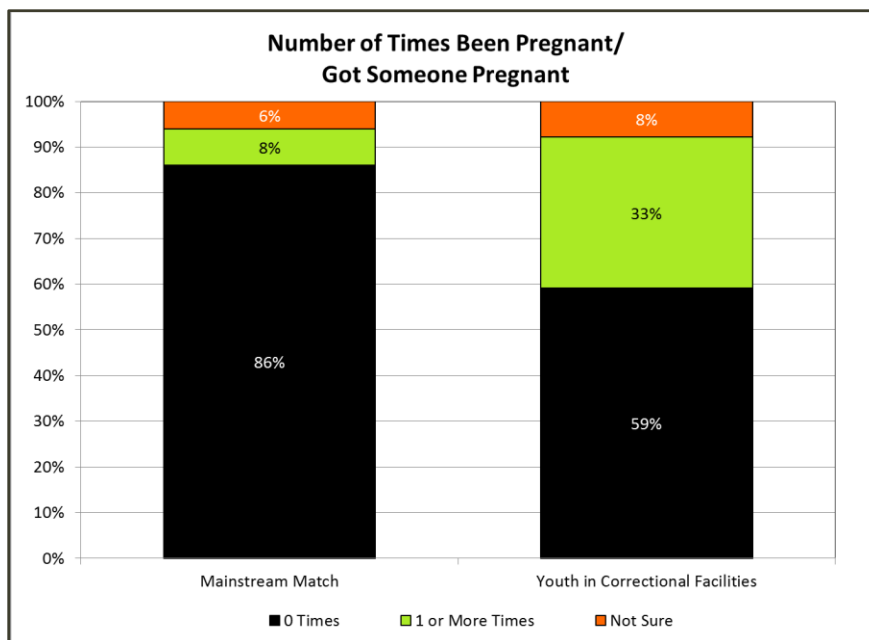
A new MSS question in 2013 inquires whether, the last time they had sex, youth used drugs or alcohol prior. Nearly half of youth in correctional facilities who have sex (49%) indicated they had used chemicals before they had sex—this was true for just 18 percent of their mainstream peers. It is possible that the use of chemicals impedes the decision to use condoms or other birth control measures.



Boys in correctional facilities are more likely than girls to report that they have had sexual intercourse (88% versus 74%). Girls in the correctional facility population overall are younger than the boys, however. Boys and girls did not differ regarding whether they were under the influence of drugs or alcohol last time they had sex or if a condom was used.

## PREGNANCY

Youth in correctional facilities who are sexually active are four times more likely than sexually active mainstream youth to report having been pregnant *at least once*. One third of youth in correctional facilities (33%) have been or have gotten someone pregnant *at least once* compared to 8 percent of mainstream students. There are no questions on the MSS related to if students are parents.



Between 6 percent and 8 percent of each student group were unsure if they had been or had gotten someone pregnant.

There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding if they reported having been pregnant or having gotten someone pregnant.

## Self-Perceptions

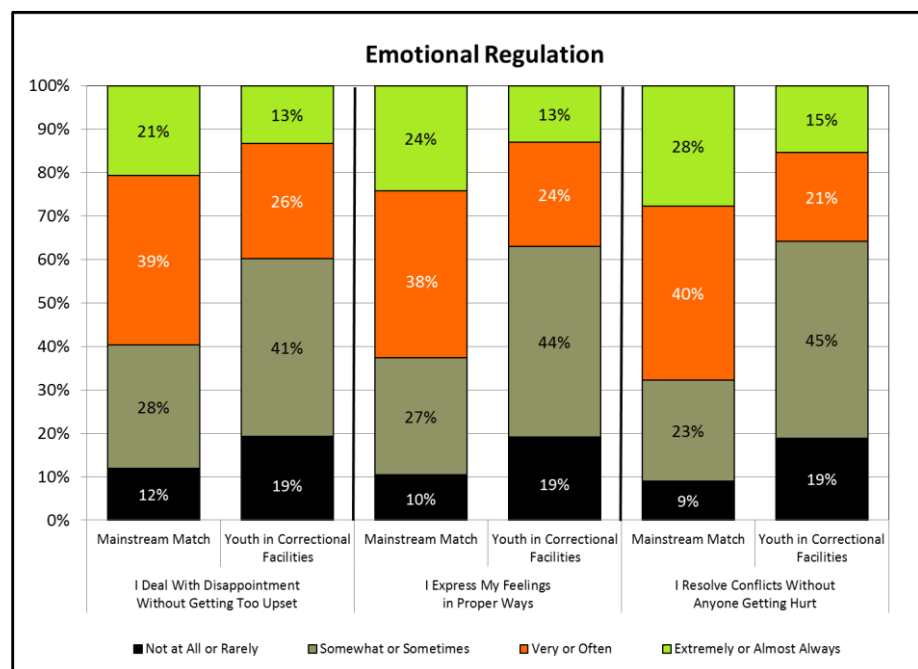
Many questions, largely new to the 2013 MSS, ask students to express their level of agreement with statements about their future, emotional regulation and decision-making capabilities. Attachment to supportive adults and a sense of purpose or meaning in life can be protective factors against both trauma and delinquency. Personal traits that help to promote resilience include positive self-concept, sense of self-control, relationship-building skills, emotional regulation skills and problem-solving skills.<sup>41</sup>

Conversely, poor emotional regulation, decision-making and problem solving skills can result in anger and frustration which can cause problems at home, in school and in the community. Increasing these skills and youths' sense of self-efficacy are cornerstones of cognitive-behavioral treatment offered in correctional facilities and community-based settings.

## EMOTIONS

Youth in correctional facilities are statistically more likely to report that they *rarely* deal with disappointment well (19%); express feelings in proper ways (19%); or resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt (19%). Over four-in-10 youth in correctional facilities say they *sometimes* handle these situations and emotions well compared to nearly four-in-10 mainstream youth report they *often* handle conflict, disappointment and feelings appropriately.

Mainstream students are more likely to say they *always* deal with disappointment, feelings and conflict in proper ways. Emotion identification and regulation skills as well as interpersonal conflict resolution are important interventions and skills for youth in correctional settings to learn.

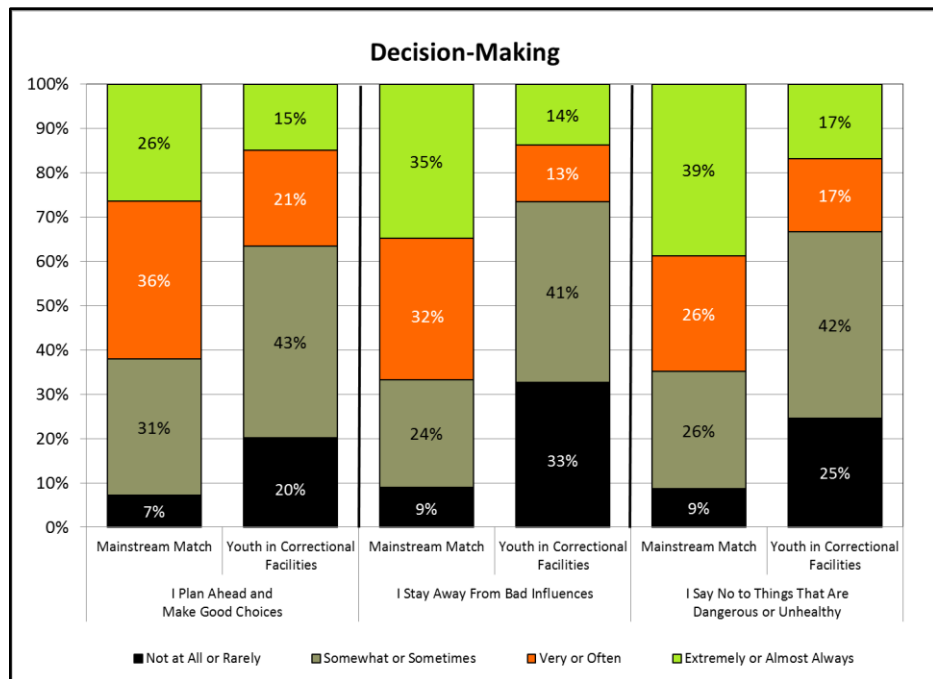


There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding MSS indicators of emotional regulation.

## DECISION-MAKING

Youth in correctional facilities are less likely to report positive decision-making than their mainstream peers. Two-in-10 youth in facilities report they *rarely* plan ahead and make good choices (20%); one-third *rarely* stay away from bad influences (33%); and one-quarter *rarely* say no to things that are dangerous or unhealthy (25%). The percentage of youth in correctional facilities who *often* or *always* use positive decision-making and foresight are low compared to those in mainstream school settings.

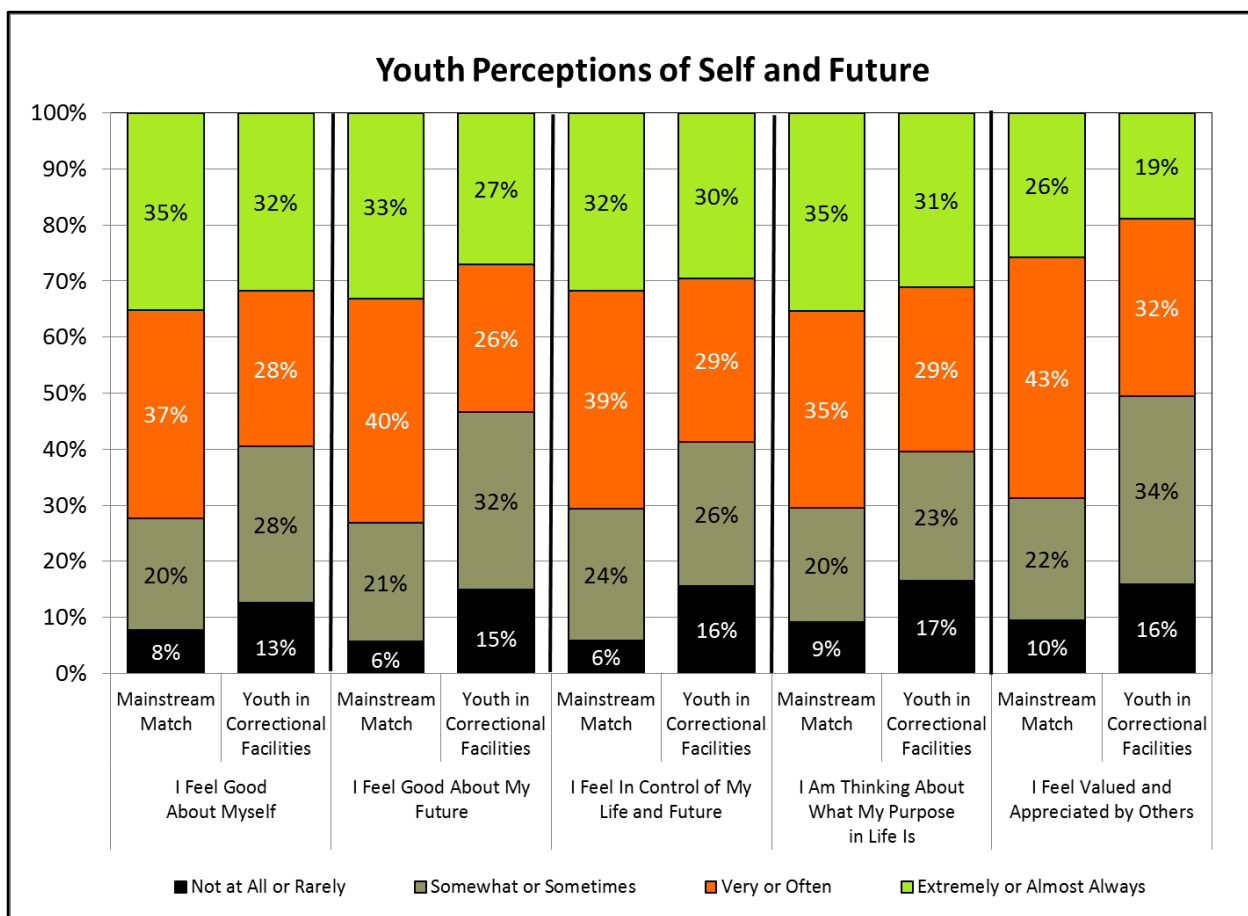
Again, helping youth in correctional facilities to recognize when situations are likely to be dangerous, unhealthy, escalate into problems or cause them trouble are cornerstones of cognitive-behavioral treatment. Short-term thinking and impulsivity can prevent youth involved in the justice system from acting in their own best interest and compromise future goals.



There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding MSS indicators of decision-making.

## SENSE OF SELF AND FUTURE

It is not uncommon for youth in correctional facilities to experience low self-esteem, a fatalistic, short-term outlook on their future, or a lack of direction and control. Responses to the 2013 MSS illustrate that youth in correctional facilities are less likely than mainstream youth to *often* or *always* feel good about themselves or their future. While over 70 percent of mainstream youth *often* or *always* feel good about themselves or their future, this is true for between 53 percent and 60 percent of youth in correctional facilities.



Youth in correctional facilities also are statistically less likely than mainstream youth to report they feel in control of their life and future, and that they are thinking about what their purpose in life is. Youth in facilities are more likely to respond *rarely* to these questions. Finally, just over half of youth in correctional facilities (51%) report they *often* or *always* feel valued and appreciated by others. Again, this is true for nearly seven-in-10 mainstream youth (69%).

Services in correctional facilities should build on youth strengths to impart a positive sense of self-worth. Enhancing these protective factors can help diminish the likelihood of reoffending and re-victimization.

There is no statistical difference between boys and girls in correctional facilities regarding MSS perceptions of self and future.

## Data Reflections

Youth in correctional facilities who participated in the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey reported statistically higher risk-taking beliefs and behaviors coupled with lower protective attitudes and beliefs than a matched sample of mainstream peers. While not highlighted in this report due to changes in MSS survey content and administration method, the responses of youth in correctional facilities to the 2013 MSS bear similarities to data collected in 2010 and 2007. These commonalities over time and around the state suggest that child-serving systems can anticipate the issues most critically affecting youth in correctional placements and implement interventions and services accordingly.

1. Demographically, youth in correctional facilities are more likely than their mainstream peers to:

- ◆ live in a single parent household, especially with their mother
- ◆ receive Free or Reduced Priced Lunch at school
- ◆ come from communities of color
- ◆ be male

Girls in correctional facilities tend to be younger than boys. Boys are more likely to identify as Black or African American.

2. Youth in correctional facilities report more challenges with their education including:

- ◆ receiving special education services
- ◆ multiple school transitions in the past year
- ◆ a lower perception that teachers at school care about students overall and them specifically
- ◆ fewer post-secondary educational goals

Boys in correctional facilities are more likely to have an IEP. Girls are less likely to feel school rules are fair and that teachers treat students fairly.

3. Youth in correctional facilities are more likely than their peers to have been victimized. A greater percentage of youth in correctional facilities report:

- ◆ physical abuse by parents or adults in their home, and by dating partners
- ◆ sexual abuse by familial or non-familial perpetrators and dating partners
- ◆ witnessing domestic violence among adults in their home and having been put down verbally by a parent
- ◆ running away from home on multiple occasions

Girls in correctional facilities experience more non-familial sexual abuse; more sexual pressure from dating partners; and are more likely to report domestic violence between parents or adults.



4. Youth in correctional facilities are more likely than their peers to report that both they and their family members have problems associated with chemical use. Youth in correctional facilities report that:

- ◆ someone they live with abuses alcohol, illegal drugs or prescription medications
- ◆ alcohol and drug use began at age 12 or younger
- ◆ chemical use has caused them personal and legal consequences
- ◆ they have difficulty controlling chemical use including an inability to set limits or challenges to cutting back their use
- ◆ they have a history of treatment for alcohol or drug problems

Most chemical health indicators for boys and girls in correctional facilities are comparable, including age of first use and history of treatment.

5. Youth in correctional facilities are more likely than their mainstream peers to report issues with mental health, emotional or behavioral health problems. Youth in correctional facilities:

- ◆ are more likely to report a long-term problem lasting at least 6 months
- ◆ have a history of treatment for a mental health, emotional or behavioral problem
- ◆ report significant problems with depression, sleeping, anxiousness and distress about events from their past
- ◆ report high levels of suicidal ideation, self-harm and attempted suicide

Girls in correctional facilities report more mental health issues than boys including more suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and more mental health treatment.

6. Youth in correctional facilities engage in more risky and illegal behavior. Youth in correctional facilities are more likely to:

- ◆ shoplift, damage property and beat up other people
- ◆ drive under the influence and become violent under the influence of drugs and alcohol
- ◆ have sex, not use condoms, and have at least one known pregnancy

Boys and girls report comparable levels of delinquency and risky behavior. Boys are more likely than girls to have had sex, and are more likely to repeatedly become violent under the influence of chemicals.

7. Youth in correctional facilities are less skilled at regulating emotions and making good decisions than their peers. Youth in correctional facilities:

- ◆ have trouble staying away from bad influences and dangerous or unhealthy things
- ◆ are less likely to manage conflict, frustration and other emotions appropriately
- ◆ are less likely to have a positive sense-of-self and the future
- ◆ do not feel as valued or appreciated by others as their peers

Boys and girls report comparable levels of difficulty managing emotions and making positive decisions. Both report comparable feelings about themselves and their futures.

Youth in correctional facilities require access to quality care and treatment that recognizes that these youth are both the perpetrators and the victims of violence and abuse. The chemical health and mental health needs of youth in Minnesota's correctional facilities are high, which may in part be due to higher levels of trauma in their past. Youth in correctional facilities need cognitive-behavioral interventions that challenge belief systems that promote delinquency, underestimating risk of harm to self, and build a sense of hope and self-efficacy around their future.

The needs of Minnesota's youth in correctional facilities cross many professional disciplines including health, public health, human services, education and juvenile justice. Furthermore, the most effective interventions include the participation of and collaboration with families, schools, communities, community-based providers, and government-based services. Youth-serving agencies at all levels must act collectively to implement best practices to support justice system-involved youth and families across the state.

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